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# HISTORY OF ENGLAND

FROM

THE PEACE OF UTRECHT

TO

THE PEACE OF VERSAILLES.

1713—1783.

BY LORD MAHON. (*Stanhope, P. H.*)

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### THE SIXTH VOLUME.

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THE  
HISTORY OF ENGLAND  
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THE PEACE OF UTRECHT.

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CHAPTER LI.

WHILE thus for very different reasons and with very different results both Franklin and Fox were dismissed from office, tidings of no common importance had reached England from North America. Throughout that country the appearance of the tea-ships, as planned by Lord North, and as freighted by the East India Company, had provoked not only resentment but resistance. It was believed, or at least it was asserted, that this was only the first step in a course of intended tyranny; that England desired nothing so much as the oppression of her Colonies; that if the local duty on the Teas should be quietly paid, other more odious imposts,—a window-tax, a hearth-tax, a land-tax, and a poll-tax,—were in contemplation, and were sure to be enacted. Even before any one of the tea-ships came in sight mobs had risen in several places, and violently threatened the consignees of the expected cargo. At Philadelphia handbills were dispersed warning the pilots on the Delaware not to bring any of these vessels into harbour, since they had been sent out on purpose to enslave and to poison the Americans! At New York other printed papers declared that the coming ships were

laden in semblance only with tea, but in truth with fetters which had been forged for them in England!

Notwithstanding the excitement produced by such exaggerations, the Colonists generally speaking did not overstep the bounds of law. In most places the consignees were so far wrought upon by terror or by shame as to renounce their functions, and enter into a public engagement to send back the cargoes without landing. At Charleston the inhabitants allowed the chests of tea to be brought on shore, but insisted that they should be withheld from sale and stored in cellars, where at last they perished from damp. Such measures, though certainly sufficient for their object, were much too tame and moderate for the prevailing taste at Boston. Three ships freighted with tea having arrived at that port, the captains observing the state of the public feeling were not only willing but anxious to depart with their cargoes. But since they had already entangled themselves with some technical forms of entry, there were difficulties in the way of their return; difficulties in obtaining either a clearance from the Custom House, or a permit from Castle William. Concession on these points was, perhaps unwisely, declined by the Governor, while the compromise adopted elsewhere of allowing the Teas to be landed and placed in store was indignantly rejected by the people. A shorter and simpler expedient was preferred. On the evening of the 16th of December 1773 a great number of persons disguised and painted as Mohawk Indians\* boarded the tea-ships, broke open the chests, and flung the contents into the sea, to the value it was computed of 18,000*l*. After this feat they quietly dispersed, neither inflicting nor yet suffering any other injury. Yet certainly no slight degree of rancorous spirit was rife among the people. Mr. John Adams, who was upon the spot, has noted in his Private Diary: "Many persons wish "that as many dead carcasses were floating in the harbour as there are chests of tea."†

\* The readers of the Spectator (now I believe many fewer than there used to be) will recollect the midnight orgies in the streets of London of another race of Mohawks. (No. 324. and 347., March 12. and April 8. 1712.)

† Works, vol. ii. p. 323. ed. 1850.

The news of this attack upon the tea-ships produced great irritation not only in the British Ministry but also in the British Parliament and people. To understand their feelings at this juncture we must remember, besides the final outrage, the long succession of angry struggles and of studied insults which ever since the passing of the Stamp Act they, their officers, and their adherents had encountered from Boston. The event of the 16th of December therefore was only the last drop in their cup of wrath; the last drop which made the waters of bitterness overflow. On the 7th of March a Royal Message was delivered communicating the principal despatches or other documents received, and recommending the whole matter to the most serious consideration of both Houses. On the 14th of the same month Lord North brought in the measure commonly known by the name of the Boston Port Bill. The preamble declared that in the present condition of the town and harbour of Boston the commerce of His Majesty's subjects could not be safely carried on, nor the customs be duly collected; and the clauses proposed to enact that from and after the 1st of June in this year it should not be lawful for any person to lade or unlade, to ship or unship, any goods from any quay or wharf within the aforesaid harbour. It was in fact intended to transfer the commerce and customs of Boston for a time to Salem, another town and port on the coast of Massachusetts. But a power was reserved to the King in Council, when peace and order should be established at Boston, and after full compensation had been made to the East India Company for the value of the Teas destroyed, to replace the trade of the town as it stood at first.

In supporting this measure Lord North relied in part upon the ground of precedents. "It may be objected," said he, "that the innocent may suffer on this occasion with the guilty; but where the authority of a town has been as it were asleep and inactive, it is no new thing for the whole town to be fined for such neglect. Thus with the City of London in King Charles the Second's time, when Dr. Lamb was killed by unknown persons, the City was fined. Such was also the case with Edinburgh in Captain Porteous's affair, when a fine was



“set upon the whole. Thus likewise at Glasgow, when “the house of Mr. Campbell was pulled down, part of “the revenue of that town was sequestered to make good “the damage.”—But no doubt the main argument of Lord North and with his hearers lay in the many scenes of turbulence, — the tarrings and the featherings, the riotings and burnings, — which ever since the passing of the Stamp Act had distinguished the town of Boston far beyond any other in America. “Do you ask,” cried Lord North in one of the debates of this time, “what the people “of Boston have done? I will tell you then. They have “tarred and feathered your subjects, plundered your “merchants, burnt your ships, denied all obedience to “your laws and authority. Yet so clement and long- “forbearing has our conduct been that it is incumbent “on us now to take a different course. Whatever may “be the consequence, we must risk something; if we do “not, all is over!”\*

Resistance to this Bill, after some doubt and hesitation, was offered by several men of note, as Dowdeswell, Burke, and Charles Fox, who now for the first time appeared in the ranks of Opposition. Colonel Barré, General Conway, and Lord John Cavendish on the whole approved it. In none of its stages, and in neither House, did its opponents venture on dividing; and only a fortnight elapsed between its first proposal and its passing. By the public in general the measure was by no means looked upon as unduly harsh or severe. The more violent party indeed contended that Boston was not bound to make any compensation for the loss of the Tea. But on the contrary the temperate friends of freedom in both countries censured the Boston Port Bill mainly on this ground, that it preceded instead of following the demand for that just compensation. I cannot but observe with pleasure how precisely in accordance on this subject was the opinion of the two greatest men of that age in their respective

\* Parl. Hist. vol. xvii. p. 1164. and 1279. In the meagre report preserved of this last speech Lord North is made to speak in general terms of “the Americans.” But from the context, and still more from the nature of the Bill discussed which had no reference to any other Colony, it is plain that his expressions were confined to the people of Boston or at most of Massachusetts.

countries, Washington and Chatham. Neither's opinion was expressed in public; neither's was known to the other; but both, as we find from their familiar correspondence, concurred. "Reparation," says Chatham, "ought to be demanded in a solemn manner, and refused by the town and magistracy of Boston, before such a bill of pains and penalties can be called just."\* And Washington writes: "The conduct of the Boston people could not justify the rigour of their (the Ministers') measure, unless there had been a requisition of payment and refusal of it."†

Even before the Boston Port Bill had yet passed the Upper House Lord North introduced another measure, the Massachusetts Government Bill. By that measure the Charter as granted to the province by King William was in some important particulars set aside. The Council, instead of being elected by the people, was henceforth, as in most of the other Colonies, to be appointed by the Crown. The judges, magistrates, and sheriffs might be nominated by the Governor, and in some cases also be removed by him, even without the consent or sanction of the Council. "How else," asked Lord North, "is the Governor to execute any authority vested in him? At present if he requires the aid of a magistrate he has not the power of appointing any one who will, nor of removing any one who will not, act; the Council alone have that power, and the dependence of the Council is now solely on the democratic part of the Constitution. It appears that the civil magistracy has been for a series of years uniformly inactive; and there must be something radically wrong in that constitution in which no magistrate for such a series of years has ever done his duty in such a manner as to enforce obedience to the laws."‡ Such considerations are by no means destitute of weight. But surely in the arguments for or against this Bill the scale much preponderates to the side of Opposition, — an Opposition not indeed effectual, but united and strong, resolute and eager. How rash the

\* To Lord Shelburne, March 20. 1774. Correspondence, vol. iv. p. 337.

† To B. Fairfax, July 20. 1774. Works, vol. ii. p. 303.

‡ Parl. Hist. vol. xvii. p. 1192.

precedent at such a time of dealing so lightly with a Royal Charter! How far wiser had it been to bear any amount of inconvenience from the defects of the existing fabric, rather than attempt its reconstruction at the very moment when the storm was raging round it!

These two important Bills were not the only ones that passed this Session in single reference to the Colony of Massachusetts. It was imagined that no fair trial could be had within the limits of that province of any persons concerned in the late disturbances; it was therefore enacted that during the next three years the Governor might have the option of transferring any persons so accused to be tried in any other Colony, or even in Great Britain. There was likewise a Bill to regulate the government of Canada, or as it was termed the "province of Quebec," and to define its boundaries, which were enlarged in the direction of the back settlements, by including all the lands not subject to any previous grant nor comprised in any previous Charter. The Governor, General Carleton, being examined before the House of Commons, stated that the Protestants in the province were then not quite 400 in number, while the French inhabitants, all Roman Catholics, amounted to 150,000.\* It was to the peace and good government of the latter that the Bill was mainly, and surely in strict justice, directed. Its provisions in no degree practically touched any of the dissatisfied Colonies. But since it authorized and sanctioned the Roman Catholic Faith, as held at that time by an immense majority of the people in Canada, it afforded on that account a topic of invective and complaint to the Protestant zealots of New-England.

During the progress of all this legislation, levelled so directly at the town of Boston, the news that came from thence was by no means of a soothing kind. At the close of February another ship freighted with Teas (it was named the *Fortune*, and commanded by Captain Graham,) having anchored in Boston Harbour, the inhabitants with great deliberation proceeded to unload the tea-chests, and to cast their contents into the sea. Well might Lord North exclaim at the news: "Is this, Sir

\* *Parl. Hist.* vol. xvii. p. 1368.

"seeing their error? Is this, Sir, reforming? Is this making restitution to the East India Company? Surely no gentleman will after this urge anything in their defence!"\*

Large as was the number of Bills produced in this Session of Parliament, it was by no means solely on them that Lord North relied. He believed, — though erroneously, yet no doubt honestly and truly, — that these Bills would avert an appeal to arms, but he felt the necessity of being prepared for either alternative. With that view he recalled Governor Hutchinson from Boston, and sent in his place a veteran of tried conduct, and high in command of the troops, General Gage. Hutchinson on his arrival in England was admitted to an audience of His Majesty, and tended much by his representations to confirm the Government in the hopes which they had formed. General Gage in like manner before his departure assured the King that the Americans would be lions only so long as the English were lambs.†

It is indeed a matter of just regret, and deserving to be ranked among the main causes of the schism in our empire which so soon afterwards ensued, that there was then a general tendency at home to undervalue and contemn the people of the Colonies. They, and more especially the natives of New England, were often called by the name of YANKEES, which had grown to be in some measure a term of reproach, although in its origin probably no more than the corruption by the native Indians of the words ENGLISH or ANGLOIS. It must be owned that the public in England were not so much to be blamed for their unfavourable judgment, but rather such men as Hutchinson and Gage, who, having the best means of information, and being Americans by birth or kindred, might well be trusted and believed. To such an extent did these disparaging reflections proceed that a doubt was even uttered whether the Americans possessed the same natural courage as the English. In the course of the ensuing year a Minister of the Crown, the

\* Debate in the House of Commons, April 21. 1774.

† The King to Lord North, Feb. 4. and July 1. 1774. Appendix to this volume.

Earl of Sandwich, when speaking in the House of Lords, and Colonel Grant, an officer in the King's service, when speaking in the House of Commons, were so grossly imprudent and ill-judging as to refer to their countrymen over the Atlantic as arrant cowards.\* Such words could not fail to sink deep in the minds of the Americans, especially of those who had borne arms. Just after the first blow had been struck Washington referred to them with a feeling of just resentment, though, as usual with him, in a tone of dignified forbearance. "This," says he, "may serve to convince Lord Sandwich and others of the same sentiment that the Americans will fight for their liberties and property, however pusillanimous in his Lordship's eyes they may appear in other respects."†

Had the Boston Port Bill stood alone, unaccompanied by any other legislation, it seems possible that the Americans of the other Colonies seeing the wrong which Boston had committed, and acknowledging the claim to some compensation for it, might, though not wholly approving, yet have acquiesced. But the proposal and still more the passing of the next measure — the Massachusetts Government Bill — made them feel their own liberty in danger. If one Charter might be cancelled so might all; if the rights of any one Colony might hang suspended on the votes of an exasperated majority in England, could any other deem itself secure? Under these impressions they resolved at all hazards to make common cause with Massachusetts. The Royalists, now and henceforth called by their countrymen "the Tories," even in their strongholds, as at New York, found themselves outnumbered. The men hitherto most moderate and calm on the popular side, as Colonel Washington, could forbear no longer. They might feel themselves the more inspirited at finding their principles approved and their oppression acknowledged by a powerful party in Great Britain. Eloquent voices had been raised in their behalf. Burke upon a motion to repeal the Tea Duty (a motion certainly not well timed, and which accordingly numbered only forty-nine supporters,) had made one of the most admired of

\* Parl. Hist. vol. xviii. p. 226. and 446.

† Writings, vol. ii. p. 406



his speeches; the first reported by himself. Lord Chatham towards the close of the Session had twice spoken against the American policy of Ministers; and his lofty tones had reverberated over the Atlantic. And if among the Americans there were any more eager or less scrupulous than the rest who already looked towards France as a future source of succour, they must have hailed as an event auspicious to them the death of Louis the Fifteenth. That monarch had expired at Versailles on the 10th of May, a victim to his own debaucheries. His grandson and successor, Louis the Sixteenth, was a prince of timid and irresolute temper, but of excellent intentions, and blameless in his private life. He had hastened to dismiss the profligate Court and no less profligate Council by which his grandsire had been governed; and although the Ministers whom he first selected might not be any more than himself men of high ability, at least they were not like the former ones debarred by ignominy at home from influence abroad. Henceforth it was plain that France would not be a powerless, nor probably an unconcerned, spectator of whatever pretensions might be started, or whatever conflicts might be waged, by foreign states.

Virginia was one of the earliest Colonies to stir in support of Boston. There the vanguard of the extreme popular party was headed as before by Patrick Henry and Thomas Jefferson; the latter of whom inditing his own Memoirs more than forty years afterwards has left a curious and authentic account of their proceedings at this time. "What we did," says he, "was with the help of Rushworth, whom we rummaged over for the Revolutionary precedents and forms of the Puritans of that day."\* Nor did they search in vain that ample storehouse of weapons against the Crown. Adopting one of its Revolutionary precedents, and altering only a few of its antiquated phrases, they drew up a Resolution that the 1st of June, on which day the Boston Port Bill was to come into effect, should be set apart for fasting, humiliation, and prayer, to implore the Divine interposition

\* Memoirs and Correspondence of Jefferson, edited by Randolph, vol. i p. 6. ed. 1829.

for averting the evils of civil war, and to give one heart and one mind to the people in defence of their just rights. But since the character of the gentlemen who drew up these words was far from being so grave or so religious as to give any weight to that Resolution in their hands, they prevailed on a venerable elder, Mr. Nicholas, to propose it in his own name. Accordingly when proposed by Mr. Nicholas the appointment of the 1st of June as a day of fasting and prayer passed without opposition. Such a vote without the Governor's sanction was deemed a daring inroad on his authority. The Earl of Dunmore, who at that period filled the office, on the very next day and in much wrath dissolved the Assembly. But a large majority of the members, nothing daunted, repaired to the Raleigh Tavern; and in their favourite Apollo chamber signed Articles of Association pledging themselves against the purchase of British merchandise, and desiring their Committee of Correspondence to communicate with the Committees of the other Colonies on the expediency of appointing delegates to meet not merely on this occasion but every year in General Congress.

Nearly the same feeling was displayed in the other Colonies. The Boston Port Bill was commonly printed with a black border round it, as though it contained funeral news; and it was cried in the streets of many towns under the title of "A barbarous, cruel, bloody, and "inhuman murder." At Philadelphia the Quakers were beginning to deem it inconsistent with their principles to strive any further against the Government; but the rest of the inhabitants agreed to suspend all business on the 1st of June. In most places the Virginia Resolution was adopted, and the day was set aside for fasting and prayer. To relieve the people of Boston under the impending loss of their trade subscriptions of money were announced; and by means of the Corresponding Committees there was set on foot a combination under the ominous name of the "Solemn League and Covenant" neither to purchase nor consume any more goods from Great Britain until their grievances should be redressed.

At Boston itself on the morning of the 1st of June all eyes were anxiously turned to the town-clock which had

no sooner struck twelve than the custom-house was closed and all legal business was suspended. The revenue-officers were removed to Salem, where the Assembly had already been convened for the week ensuing. But General Gage in the execution of his appointed duty found almost insuperable difficulties from the resolute and wide-spread resentment of the people. When the Assembly did meet according to his order it displayed such a spirit as in his opinion to require its immediate Dissolution. He received an adverse Address even from the merchants and freeholders of Salem, commiserating the fate of Boston, and declining to raise their fortunes on the ruin of their neighbours. Other Resolutions betokening in their terms no slight ferment of the public mind were passed at various meetings of the towns and counties. But far beyond them all in vehemence were the Resolutions of the delegates from the towns in the county of Suffolk, of which towns Boston was the chief. These purported: that no obedience was due to the late Acts of Parliament; that no taxes should be paid to Government; that the persons who had accepted seats in the Council by nomination from the King had acted in direct violation of their public duty; that the late Act establishing the Roman Catholic religion in Canada was dangerous in an extreme degree to the Protestant Religion, and to the rights and liberties of all America; that the inhabitants of the towns should use their utmost diligence to acquaint themselves with the art of war, and for that purpose should appear under arms at least once in every week.

According to the terms of the recent Act of Parliament thirty-six persons had been named by the Crown as members of the Council for this province, but only twenty-four would consent to take the oaths, and of these one half under the dread of personal violence speedily resigned. The superior Court of Justice met in due form at Boston with the Chief Justice at its head, but the juries to a man refused to serve. Throughout the Colony the sheriffs, magistrates, and clerks either made their peace with the people by solemnly promising not to act under the new law, or else fled for shelter to the well-guarded town of Boston. That town indeed appeared

the sole remaining spot within the province where the King's government was obeyed, or where its officers and adherents were secure. General Gage having received large reinforcements had now under his command in Massachusetts no less than six regiments with a train of artillery. These troops for the most part he encamped on the Common close to Boston; and desertion becoming frequent and much encouraged, he stationed a strong guard on Boston Neck, the narrow isthmus which alone connected the town and Common with the open country. Some time afterwards, seeing the necessity of keeping the soldiers separate from the people, he began to fortify that neck of land, and also to build temporary barracks. As the time approached for the general muster of the Militia he deemed it essential in that state of public feeling to deprive them of their stores and ammunition, which he removed from the provincial arsenal at Cambridge to his own custody at Boston. Such measures, however, and above all his intrenchments on Boston Neck, could not be adopted without greatly adding to the exasperation of the province. A cry was raised that he designed to blockade the town, and reduce the inhabitants by famine. He found his intended works obstructed at every turn; his supplies of straw were set on fire; his boats conveying bricks were sunk; his waggons laden with timber were overturned. Nothing but his watchful care and brave forbearance still prevented (and could they always prevent?) some bloody conflict.

It is a characteristic of such times as these in Massachusetts that even the gravest personages no longer frown on even the most lawless proceedings. We find, for instance, a Minister of the Gospel in one of his familiar letters record with manifest glee a scheme of wanton assault, and a jocular pretext assigned for it, upon a gentleman who had no otherwise offended than through the office which he held:—"Commissioner Hallowell passed "through Cambridge while the people were assembled "there. He had gone by some time, when it was stated "by somebody that it might be proper to have a conference with him. A number of men on horseback "instantly set out to bring him back, but they were dissuaded. . . . A single horseman of his own head

"went on, and coming up to him in a chaise with a companion and servant on horseback told him he must stop and go back. Hallowell snapped his pistol twice at him, got upon his servant's horse, and rode with the utmost speed to town, followed by the horseman till he came within call of the guard at the entrance of the town."\*

During this time the idea of a General Congress spread rapidly through the Colonies, and was carried into effect mainly by means of the lately appointed Committees of Correspondence. Then it was that the importance of such Committees became apparent; without them it seems certain that the scheme would never have ripened into fruit. They selected Philadelphia for the place, and the beginning of September for the time of meeting. The Colonies which agreed to send delegates to the Congress were twelve; namely, the four New England States and the two Carolinas, Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Maryland, New York, New Jersey, and Delaware. In all these the mode of appointing the delegates was by no means the same. Thus in Massachusetts they were appointed by the legitimate Assembly just before its Dissolution, and with a race for time against the Governor. In Virginia they owed their nomination to a new House of Burgesses elected for that object without the Governor's authority, and bearing the name of a Convention. In two or three other provinces the vote of a Committee, or even the cry of a multitude, was deemed sufficient.† Nor was the number of the delegates uniform; it varied in the several Colonies from eight to two. This disparity, however, did not affect the votes, since it was agreed that each Colony should have one vote, whatever might be the number of its deputies. In the directions and instructions which each Colony gave its representatives on this occasion there was also much

\* Dr. Cooper to Dr. Franklin, Sept. 9. 1774. See also the American Archives, vol. i. p. 764.

† The latter was the case in New York where, as Chief Justice Marshall says, "it is probable that no legislative act authorizing an election to Congress could have been obtained." Yet the members thus chosen contrary to law "were very readily received into Congress." (Life of Washington, note to vol. ii. p. 157. ed. 1805.)

variety; some being couched in moderate, some in violent, others again in vague and general, terms.

When fully assembled the members of Congress amounted to fifty-five. Most of them were lawyers. On the 4th of September nearly all appeared in Philadelphia. Next day they met for public business at the Carpenters' Hall; and as their first step they unanimously chose for President Peyton Randolph, of Virginia, the late Speaker of the House of Burgesses. The Virginian deputies indeed, among whom were Henry and Washington, seem to have been much superior to their brethren from the other provinces. Thus speaks of them a gentleman of Philadelphia: "There are some fine fellows come from Virginia, but they are very high. The Bostonians are mere milksops to them. We understand they are the capital men of their Colony both in fortune and under-standing."\*

Having selected their President, the Congress next determined that their deliberations should take place with closed doors, and that their proceedings, except such as they might themselves choose to publish, should be kept inviolably secret. By this system they added greatly to the effect of their final measures, and bore on all public occasions the appearance of entire concord and undivided vigour; while on the contrary, if we may trust the disclosures of one of their own members, Mr. Joseph Galloway, long irresolution and numerous controversies had prevailed among them. It is clear indeed that at this period in America there were even on the patriotic side two opposite parties in presence. The first, and as I believe by far the smaller, though comprising a large part of Virginia and nearly the whole of Massachusetts, was already ripe for civil war. To the other party belonged such men as Mr. Dickinson of Pennsylvania, the author of the "Farmer's Letters." These men felt as yet no disaffection to the Throne, no enmity to England; they had hitherto, in their own opinion and intention, opposed only her encroachments but not her just authority; and while firmly determined to have redress for

\* Life and Correspondence of President Reed, by his grandson William Reed, vol. i. p. 75., an authentic and important contribution to general history.



their grievances, they were no less firmly determined to uphold their connection. — An Englishman viewing these things after the event cannot but observe with pain, and also in a national sense with self-reproach, how strong had been, and was still, the tie of duty and affection which (always excepting Massachusetts) bound the Colonies to England. During the Session and from the seat of the first Congress we find an American statesman and patriot, as yet a friend to the mother country, but afterwards Adjutant General to Washington, write as follows to Lord Dartmouth: “Believe me, my Lord, no King ever had more loyal subjects, or any country more affectionate Colonists, than the Americans WERE. I who am but a young man well remember when the King was always mentioned with a respect approaching to adoration; and to be an Englishman was alone a sufficient recommendation for any office of friendship or civility. But I confess with the greatest concern that these happy days seem passing swiftly away; and unless some scheme of accommodation can be speedily formed the affection of the Colonists will be irrecoverably lost.”\*

In the further course of this General Congress the extreme Anti-English party gave way to the less forward. They wisely felt that all their hopes depended on united action, and determined not indeed to relinquish but postpone their ulterior views. By their concessions the measures of the Congress — all apparently unanimous — were upon the whole marked by moderation, combined with dignity and firmness. They indeed go the length of approving in word the Resolves of the Suffolk County meeting, but themselves avoided the violence which that meeting had displayed. They drew up an able Declaration of Rights, claiming for themselves all the liberties of Englishmen, which they said they had neither surrendered, forfeited, nor lost, by emigration. From these premises they deduced that several recent Acts of Parliament, and more especially those of the last Session against the province of Massachusetts, were violations of their rights, and that the repeal of such Acts was es-

\* Mr. Reed to the Earl of Dartmouth, Sept. 25. 1774.

sential to the restoration of harmony between Great Britain and her Colonies. As practical means to this end the Congress passed Resolutions to suspend all imports, or use of imports, from Great Britain or Ireland, or any of their dependencies, after the first day of December next, and all exports to those countries after the 10th of September in the year ensuing, unless American grievances should be redressed before that time. An Association to carry out these Resolutions was then formed and subscribed by every Member present; and with almost equal ardour was that Association as soon as known approved and joined throughout the twelve Colonies.

In the Resolutions then published, and thus forbidding exports to Great Britain or Ireland, there appear these words, strangely devoid of congruity: "except rice to Europe." But this interpolation was inserted to gratify the delegates from Carolina, who otherwise had threatened to secede. Such was the cautious regard to local interests required at this period to secure a seeming unanimity.

The Congress likewise published several Addresses, as one to the people of Great Britain, another to the people of Canada, and a Petition to the King. The preparation of each of these state-papers had been referred to a small Committee, but, as was commonly thought, the Address to the English people was composed by Mr. John Jay of New York, and the Petition to the King by Mr. John Dickinson of Pennsylvania. The Address to the people of Canada, though like the rest by no means wanting in eloquence, displayed much misapprehension as to the feeling in that country. By the Québec Act of last Session the administration of the province had been vested in a Governor and Council nominated by the Crown; and the Trial by Jury though granted in criminal was withheld in civil cases. In the British Parliament the fervid Opposition orators — as Dunning and Chatham — had denounced these provisions in the strongest terms as robbing British subjects of their British rights. Yet in whom at that period could a right of election have been safely vested? In the English Protestants still so few in numbers? Or in the French Roman Catholics still so recent in allegiance? Above all it was not considered

that the mass of the people in Canada born and bred under the old French civil laws were accustomed to no other, and according to the evidence produced at the Bar of the House of Commons were desirous of no other.\* Such evidence, though resting on experienced and respectable authority, was overlooked in the American Congress as it had been by the Opposition in the British Parliament. It was imagined that the Canadians were secretly pining and dissatisfied at the acts of the British Government,—an idea wholly erroneous, which caused at this time a fruitless Address, and after the war had commenced a baffled expedition.

The Congress having completed the business before them passed a Resolution for convening another Congress on the 10th of May in the ensuing year, and then on the 26th of October quietly dissolved themselves.— Even while their sittings still continued the breach in Massachusetts between the administration and the people far from closing had grown wider. The Governor had issued Writs for a new Assembly to meet at Salem in the beginning of October. But finding the resignations in his new Council so many that the Council had no longer the legal numbers to do business, he changed his purpose, and issued a Proclamation to countermand his Writs. That Proclamation was treated by the patriots as so much waste paper. In open defiance of it they met at Salem, from whence next day they adjourned to Concord, an inland town still further removed from the

\* See Parl. Hist. vol. xvii. p. 1367, &c. Thus, for instance, in the examination of General Carleton who had commanded in the province:

“*Mr. Mackworth.* Did you find the Canadians disapprove the “Trial by Jury? (in civil cases.)

“*General Carleton.* Very much. They have often said to me “that they thought it very extraordinary that English gentlemen “should think their property safer in the determination of tailors, “shoemakers, mixed with people in trade, than in that of the “Judges.

“*Lord North.* Did they express wishes of having an Assembly?

“*General Carleton.* Much the contrary. In the conversations I “have had with them they have all said that when they found what “disputes the other Colonies had with the Crown upon account of “Assemblies they would much rather be without them.”

Governor's control. There they voted themselves a provincial Congress, and began to administer the affairs of the Colony as though they had been legally convened. They entrusted the principal power to a select body of their own Members to be called the "Committee of Safety," a precedent afterwards followed both by other Colonies and by the Congress, and at a later period by the *COMITÉS DU SALUT PUBLIC* in France.\* Above all they drew up a plan for their defence; they provided ammunition and stores for twelve thousand Militia; they appointed as chiefs Artemas Ward and Jedediah Preble, who had seen some service in the late Canadian war; and they enrolled a great number of selected Militia or *MINUTE-MEN*, so called from their engagement which was to appear in arms at a minute's warning. — To guard against such projects a Royal Proclamation was issued in England forbidding the export of arms and ammunition to the Colonies. The news of that Proclamation added fuel to the flame. Several riots ensued, which, though not serious, were significant. In Rhode Island the people seized a train of artillery belonging to the Crown. In New Hampshire they surprised a small fort, named William and Mary, garrisoned only by an officer and five men.

While thus each packet-ship which in succession reached England from America brought gloomier and gloomier tidings to the friends of peace, the English people were involved in the turmoil and conflict of a General Election. The Parliament now approaching its Septennial period was dissolved by Proclamation on the 30th of September. Several seats continued to be bought and sold; thus earlier in the year the estate of Gatton comprising the nomination of two Members for that borough had been disposed of for 75,000*l*.† But upon the whole we hear much less of venality at this General Election than in the preceding one. In most of the populous places where the public feeling could be shown it

\* On the appointment and powers of this first "Committee of Safety" see the *American Archives*, vol. i. p. 843.

† *Annual Register*, 1774, p. 81. I have heard it said that in 1830 the late Lord Monson paid 180,000*l*. for the same estate.

was shown clearly and beyond dispute on the side of Ministers. Thus in Westminster Burke who desired to stand could meet with no encouragement.\* Two gentlemen who did stand — Lord Mahon as the kinsman of Chatham, and Humphrey Cotes as the friend of Wilkes — were utterly defeated by the Court candidates, Lord Thomas Clinton and Lord Percy. The common sentiment was that the Government during the last few years had been justly provoked by the misconduct of Massachusetts and the other New England provinces, — that conciliation had been tried and had failed, — that at all hazards the refractory and rebellious spirit of that country must be quelled. Such at this period were the feelings of the people; such also were the feelings of the King. In such feelings, as in the contrary feelings of America, there was no doubt a foundation of truth. But unhappily the two nations on the opposite shores of the Atlantic, like the two Knights in the old legend, would look only to the colour on their own side of the shield.

The result of these Elections therefore was not only to confirm but to increase the general majority of Ministers. Not of course that their opponents were everywhere alike defeated. At Bristol after a severe contest Burke was triumphantly returned. In Middlesex no competitor ventured even to appear against Wilkes and Glynn. In London the City men were keen as ever on the side of Opposition. Already a year before had they shown their tendency by selecting for their Sheriffs two natives of America, Sayre and William Lee.† They now chose for their Members four thorough-going adversaries to Lord North; and further still, at this same period nominated Wilkes as their Lord Mayor.

\* Observe his angry expressions in writing to Lord Rockingham; (Correspondence, vol. i. p. 471—477.) The rumour which he heard through Dr. Morris that “a Spanish nobleman has left Lord Mahon “50,000*l*.” was a mere (may I not add an Electioneering?) fable.

† In 1775 Stephen Sayre was committed to the Tower on a charge of High Treason. He had many other adventures, some at Berlin and St. Petersburg; (see the Malmesbury Papers, vol. i. p. 328.) returned to America, where he became an active opponent of General Washington's administration; and survived till 1820. Note to the Reed Correspondence, vol. i. p. 27



Thus at length had Wilkes attained two high objects of ambition. In November he was installed as Lord Mayor of London. In November also he was permitted to take his seat as Member for Middlesex. The Government had wisely determined to consider his alleged disqualification as terminated by the Dissolution, and they interposed no further obstacle in the way of his admission. But as the ablest politicians had all along predicted, the moment his persecution ceased so did also his importance. When quietly allowed to be a Lord Mayor and a County Member he became—nobody. Having neither talent in his speeches nor yet weight in his character he quickly dwindled to an insignificant and for the most part a silent vote. Some time afterwards the office of City Chamberlain becoming vacant, the people of London remembered their ancient favourite; and that lucrative and easy post was held by him until his death in 1797.—Fortune, however, had yet in store for Wilkes one further triumph. In 1782 he moved in the House of Commons, as he had often done before, that all the Resolutions relative to his expulsion should be expunged from the Journals, and (thus variable is the temper of popular assemblies) the expunging was then carried by as large a majority as the expulsion had once been! Subsequently, as a Member of Parliament, Wilkes became an habitual supporter of Mr. Pitt's administration. Sometimes he appeared at the King's Levee and found himself graciously received. On one of these occasions the King addressed to him an inquiry respecting his friend Serjeant Glynn. "Pray, Sir," answered Wilkes, "do not call Serjeant Glynn my friend; he was a "WILKITE, which I can assure Your Majesty I never "was!"

The newly elected Parliament met on the 29th of November. Amendments to the Address, claiming the fullest information on American affairs, were moved in the Peers by the Duke of Richmond, in the Commons by Lord John Cavendish. They could muster only thirteen votes in the Upper House; in the Lower only seventy-three; a decisive proof of the weakness of Opposition at that period. The essential business was postponed until after the Christmas holidays. Then it was that Lord Chatham emerged from his retirement. For some time



past he had seen in the clearest light the urgent necessity of reconciliation with America. Not indeed that he could be blind to the manifold grounds of provocation which Massachusetts had afforded. But he felt that provocation could no longer be treated as such when it came from one united province, and when it was supported by eleven provinces more. He felt, as Burke at the same period truly and finely said, that he did not know the method of drawing up an indictment against a whole people.\* There remained then only the hope, perhaps too sanguine, yet such as full success had crowned in the case of the Highland regiments, to disarm inveterate hostility by generous confidence. With these views Chatham appeared in the House of Lords on the 20th of January, without any previous notice of his precise object, having only in general terms announced a motion on American affairs. The Bar was crowded with Americans, amongst others, by Chatham's own invitation, Dr. Franklin. The other hearers comprised young William Pitt, who writing to his mother next morning gives an animated account of the debate. "No wonder," says he, "my father is lame from standing so long; his first speech lasted above an hour, and the second half an hour, — surely the two finest speeches that ever were made before, unless by himself. . . . The matter and manner both were striking; far beyond what I can express."† Chatham moved an Address to the King praying that in order to open a way towards allaying the ferments and softening the animosities in America His Majesty would send orders to General Gage to remove his troops as soon as possible from the town of Boston. "Laying of papers on your table," he cried, "or counting numbers in a division, will not avert or postpone the hour of danger; it must arrive, my Lords, unless these fatal Acts of last Session are done away; it must arrive in all its horrors. . . . But it is not

\* Works, vol. iii. p. 69. ed. 1815.

† Chatham Papers, vol. iv. p. 377. A good report (good at least for that day) of these celebrated speeches was taken by Hugh Boyd and first published in 1779. It was on this occasion that Dr. Franklin used the remarkable expressions of praise which I have elsewhere cited. (vol. iii. p. 20. sec. ed.)

“merely repealing these Acts of Parliament, it is not  
“cancelling a piece of parchment, that can win back  
“America to our bosom; you must repeal her fears and  
“her resentments, and you may then hope for her love  
“and gratitude. But now, insulted with an armed force  
“at Boston; irritated with an hostile array before her  
“eyes; her concessions, even if you could force them,  
“would be suspicious and insecure. . . . But it is more  
“than evident that you cannot force them, united as they  
“are, to your unworthy terms of submission. It is im-  
“possible; and when I hear General Gage censured for  
“inactivity, I must retort with indignation on those  
“whose headlong measures and improvident councils  
“have betrayed him into his present situation. His  
“situation reminds me, my Lords, of the answer of a  
“French General in the civil wars of France,—Monsieur  
“de Condé opposed to Monsieur de Turenne. He was  
“asked how it happened that he did not take his adver-  
“sary prisoner as he was often very near him. ‘Be-  
“cause,’—replied Condé very honestly,—‘because I am  
“afraid he might take me!’

“When your Lordships look at the papers transmitted  
“us from America, when you consider their decency,  
“firmness, and wisdom, you cannot but respect their  
“cause, and wish to make it your own. For myself I  
“must declare and avow that in all my reading of his-  
“tory,—and it has been my favourite study; I have  
“read Thucydides and have admired the master-states  
“of the world,—no nation or body of men can stand in  
“preference to the General Congress at Philadelphia.  
“All attempts to impose servitude on such men, to esta-  
“blish despotism over such a mighty Continent, must be  
“vain, must be fatal. We shall be forced ultimately to  
“retract; let us retract while we can, not when we  
“must. I say we must necessarily undo these violent  
“oppressive Acts; they must be repealed; you will re-  
“peal them; I pledge myself for it that you will in the  
“end repeal them. I stake my reputation on it. I will  
“consent to be taken for an idiot if they are not finally  
“repealed. Avoid then this humiliating disgraceful ne-  
“cessity. . . . To conclude, my Lords, if the Ministers  
“thus persevere in misadvising and misleading the King,

“ I will not say that they can alienate the affections of his subjects from his Crown, but I will affirm that they will make the Crown not worth his wearing; I will not say that the King is betrayed, but I will pronounce that the kingdom is undone.”

The motion of Chatham was ably supported by his friends Lords Shelburne and Camden. Lord Rockingham also said a few words in its favour. But the Ministers opposed it with much warmth; instead of recalling troops from Boston, they said it would rather behove them to send more. On a division only 18 Peers were found to vote for the motion; against it 68.—It was noticed that this small minority comprised both Lord Grosvenor and the Duke of Cumberland. His Royal Highness—it may be said in passing—was not long in joining without reserve the ranks of Opposition. Once in the lobby of the House he walked up to Dr. Price to compliment him on a most vehement pamphlet in favour of the Americans which Dr. Price had lately written. “ I sat up to read it last night,” said the Duke, “ so late that it had almost blinded me!”—“ On the greater part of the nation,” observed Dunning who was standing by, “ it has had exactly the opposite effect; it has opened their eyes!”

Far from being daunted by the late division, and resolved to leave no effort untried to avert a civil war, Chatham with characteristic energy forthwith applied himself to prepare and present to the House “ a Provisional Bill for settling the Troubles in America.” In the framing of this measure he sought the counsel and aid of Dr. Franklin. Already in the month of August preceding they had become acquainted, through the mediation of Lord Stanhope, who carried Dr. Franklin to Hayes. Lord Chatham had then referred to the idea which began to prevail in England that America aimed at setting up for itself as a separate state. The truth of any such idea was loudly denied by Dr. Franklin. “ I assured his Lordship that having more than once travelled almost from one end of the Continent to the other, and kept a great variety of company, eating, drinking, and conversing with them freely, I never had heard in any conversation from any person, drunk or sober, the least expression of a wish for a separation,

“or hint that such a thing would be advantageous to America. . . . . In fine, Lord Chatham expressed much satisfaction in my having called upon him, and particularly in the assurances I had given him that America did not aim at independence.”\* Yet these assurances, however earnest or frequently repeated, by no means expressed the true and inmost thoughts of Franklin. At this very period a young American from Boston, Mr. Josiah Quincy, arrived in England. He had taken a zealous part with the “Sons of Liberty,” as they termed themselves, of his native province, and in London had almost daily intercourse with Dr. Franklin, his father’s early friend. In one of his secret letters to his confederates at Boston, dated the 27th of November 1774, Mr. Quincy says: “Dr. Franklin is an American in heart and soul; you may trust him; his ideas are not contracted within the narrow limits of exemption from taxes, but are extended upon the broad scale of total emancipation.—He is explicit and bold upon the subject.”†

At the time in question Chatham was not, and could not be, aware of this double game. Confiding in Dr. Franklin’s truthfulness, and knowing the great influence of his name in America, he was most anxious to secure his co-operation in his healing measure. As a channel of communication Chatham employed Lord Mahon, who, already his kinsman by birth, had recently become his son-in-law. Lord Mahon had been bred at Geneva; “that little but learned Republic” as he long afterwards termed it, where he had imbibed an eager, nay enthusiastic, attachment both for liberty and science. At the age of only seventeen he had gained the gold medal prize from the Academy at Copenhagen for the best Essay on the Vibrations of the Pendulum; and since that time he had zealously pursued the experiments of Franklin upon Electricity. To Franklin therefore at his lodgings in Craven Street was Lord Mahon now despatched by Chatham, requesting a visit from the philosopher at Hayes.

\* Works, vol. v. p. 7. ed. 1844. Franklin’s own narrative of these conferences and negotiations was written on his voyage homewards in the form of a letter to his son, the date being March 22. 1775.

† Life by Jared Sparks, p. 372.

'The philosopher went as invited, and some preliminary conversation ensued. Next Sunday morning the Earl returned the visit in Craven Street, bringing with him his plan of conciliation ready written out for Dr. Franklin to keep awhile and consider carefully. "I am come," said Chatham, "to set my judgment by yours as men set "their watches by a regulator." — "His Lordship," adds Franklin, "stayed with me near two hours, his "equipage waiting at the door; and being there while "people were coming from Church it was much taken "notice of and talked of, as at that time was every little "circumstance that men thought might possibly any way "affect American affairs. Such a visit from so great a "man on so important a business flattered not a little "my vanity; and the honour of it gave me the more "pleasure, as it happened on (the 29th of January) the "very day twelvemonth that the Ministry had taken so "much pains to disgrace me before the Privy Council."

On the Tuesday following (for time was precious since Chatham intended to make his motion on the Wednesday) Franklin once more repaired to Hayes with the Draft Bill and some notes of his own upon it. "I stayed," says he, "near four hours, but his Lordship in the manner of, I think, all eloquent persons was so full and "diffuse in supporting every particular I questioned that "there was not time to go through half my memoranda. "He is not easily interrupted, and I had such pleasure "in hearing him that I found little inclination to interrupt him. Therefore considering that neither of us "had much expectation that the plan would be adopted "entirely as it stood, and that in the course of its consideration if it should be received proper alterations "might be introduced, . . . I therefore ceased my "querying. And though afterwards many people were "pleased to do me the honour of supposing I had a considerable share in composing it; I assure you that the "addition of a single word only was made at my instance, "namely, CONSTITUTIONS after CHARTERS; for my filling "up at his request a blank with the titles of Acts proper "to be repealed, which I took from the proceedings of "the Congress, was no more than might have been done "by any copying clerk." — Franklin perhaps was not

sorry to have thus avoided committing himself as to any one of the details, and might rather choose to ascertain and to be guided by the prevailing opinion in America.

On Wednesday the 1st of February, as already determined, Chatham again appeared in the House of Lords, and after a preliminary speech, — “a most excellent “speech,” says Franklin, — laid his Bill upon the Table. The scheme which it unfolded was a large and comprehensive one. In the first place it declared in the most explicit terms the dependency of the Colonies upon the British Crown, and their subordination to the British Parliament in all matters touching the general weal of the whole empire, and above all in the regulation of trade. On the other hand it proposed to enact no less explicitly that no tax or tallage or other charge for the revenue should be levied from any body of British freemen in America without the consent of its own representative assembly. It declared that delegates from the several Colonies lately assembled at Philadelphia should, as they desired, meet at the same town and hold another Congress on the 9th of May ensuing; then to consider, in the first place, the making due recognition of the supreme legislative authority of Parliament, and next, over and above the usual charges for the support of civil government in the respective Colonies, the making a free grant to the King of a certain perpetual revenue towards the alleviation of the national debt. “No doubt,” it was added, “being had but this just free aid will be in such “honourable proportion as may seem meet and becoming “from great and flourishing Colonies towards a parent “country labouring under the heaviest burthens, which “in no inconsiderable part have been willingly taken “upon ourselves and our posterity for the defence, extension, and prosperity of the Colonies; . . . always “understood that the free grant of an aid as heretofore “required and expected from the Colonies is not to be “considered as a condition of redress, but as a just testimony of their affection.” But although the new grant was thus left to the spontaneous choice of Congress, it was stipulated that the other provisions relinquishing the right of taxation to the American Assemblies should not take effect unless the Congress as an indispensable con-



dition first duly recognized the supreme legislative authority of Parliament. Another clause provided, in conformity with the prayer of the last Congress, that the powers of the Admiralty and Vice Admiralty Courts in America should be restrained within their ancient limits, and that it should not in future be lawful to send persons indicted for murder in any province of America to another Colony or to Great Britain for trial. The Acts of Parliament relating to America since 1764, and above all the Acts of the last Session, were wholly repealed. Judges in America as in England were henceforth to hold their offices during their good behaviour, and not merely during the pleasure of the Crown. The Charters and Constitutions of the several provinces were not again to be invaded or resumed unless on some legal grounds of forfeiture. "So,"—these words form part of the concluding sentence of the Bill,—"so shall true reconciliation avert impending calamities."

The Bill having thus been propounded by its author, Lord Dartmouth as Secretary for the Colonies next rose. He said that the Bill contained matter of so much weight and magnitude as to require to be fully considered, and he therefore hoped the Noble Earl did not expect their Lordships to decide upon it by an immediate vote, but was willing it should lie upon the Table for deliberation. Lord Chatham answered readily that he expected nothing more. But unhappily those friends of the Duke of Bedford who had joined the administration continued to be animated, as his Grace had been, by a special and keen hostility to the pretensions of America. Of that section in the Government the chief was the Earl of Sandwich. He rose with much heat to protest against the Bill, which he said he could never believe to be the production of any British Peer, but which seemed to him rather the work of some American; and here he looked full at Dr. Franklin who was leaning on the Bar. He concluded with the motion that the Bill should be at once rejected. Several Peers, as Shelburne and Camden, argued for the measure as it stood; others, as Lyttleton and Temple, objected to some points in it, as that the Quebec Bill should be included among the Acts to be repealed, but on the whole were willing to adopt it as

the basis of a final settlement. The contumelious and, as Lord Temple termed it, the unprecedented motion of Lord Sandwich was eagerly supported by another of the Bedfords, Lord Gower. Thus did the First Lord of the Admiralty and the President of the Council stand forth against their own colleague the Secretary of State. But as the debate proceeded an Opposition Peer having complimented Lord Dartmouth on his superior candour, Lord Dartmouth rose again in much embarrassment and said that he could not accept the praise offered for a candour of which he was now ashamed; that he had changed his mind, and should give his vote for rejecting the Bill immediately. So much of violence in some of the Ministry, so much of vacillation in others, afforded grounds for a fierce philippic against them which Chatham poured forth in his reply: "Such,"—he cried addressing them,— "such are your well-known characters and abilities " that sure I am that any plan of reconciliation, however " moderate, wise, and feasible, must fail in your hands. " Who then can wonder that you should put a negative " on any measure which must annihilate your power, " deprive you of your emoluments, and at once reduce " you to that state of insignificance for which God and " nature designed you?"

When at last on this memorable night the House divided a much increased minority of 32 appeared in favour of at least considering the Bill, but a phalanx of 61 decided its rejection. The rejected Bill was immediately printed and circulated by Lord Chatham as an appeal to the public judgment.

It may be proper, or at least pardonable, here to pause for an inquiry, what probable issue might have attended an opposite decision in the British Parliament? If the Ministers had been defeated on this Bill,—if in consequence they had resigned, and it in other hands been carried through,—would the Americans have accepted the measure cheerfully and readily,—would it for a long time to come have closed the breach and cemented the union with the mother country? From all the facts and testimonies then or since made public I answer without hesitation that it would. The sword was then slumbering in its scabbard. On both sides there were injuries

to redress, but not as yet bloodshed to avenge. It was only a quarrel; it was not as yet a war. Even the boldest leaders of that war in after years, whether in council or the field, were still in January 1775 the firm friends of Colonial subordination. Washington himself — (and he at least was no dissembler; from him at least there never came any promise or assurance that did not deserve the most implicit credit;) — had only a few months before presided at a meeting of Fairfax County in Virginia. That meeting, while claiming relief of grievances, had also at his instance adopted the following Resolve: "That it is our greatest wish and inclination, "as well as interest, to continue our connection with, and "dependence upon, the British Government."\* But further still, although the first Congress was praised by Chatham for its moderate counsels, and although the calmer voice of History has ratified the praise, we learn that these moderate counsels did not lag behind, but rather exceeded and outran, the prevailing sentiment in many of the Colonies. To this fact we find an unimpeachable testimony in the letters of President Reed, who, writing to a friend in strict confidence, laments that "the proceedings of Congress have been pitched on too "high a key for some of these middle provinces."† With such feelings how gladly, how gratefully, would they have welcomed the hand of reconciliation stretched out by the Parliament of England! It may be true indeed that such feelings as these did not prevail in all, or nearly all, the Colonies. It may be true especially that no amount of good government, of forbearance, or of kindness would have won back Massachusetts. But herein lay, as I think, the especial force and efficacy of Lord Chatham's scheme, that it did not refer the questions of Parliamentary supremacy and Colonial taxation to the decision of any one province, but, as the Americans themselves desired, to the decision of a Congress composed from all the provinces, so that disaffection, how-

\* Washington's Writings as edited by Sparks, vol. ii. Appendix, p. 490.

† To Mr. De Berdt, Feb. 13. 1775. Life and Correspondence, vol. i. p. 96.

ever firmly rooted here and there, would of course be overpowered by a loyal and a large majority. Nor do I believe that the proposal of a new grant to the Crown, and the consequent necessity of increased taxation to the people, would have interposed any serious obstacle. The load of taxation on the Colonies was at this period light indeed. According to a calculation made by Lord North in that very year, each inhabitant of England paid in taxes upon an average not less than five and twenty shillings annually, but each inhabitant of British America no more than sixpence.\* The experience of the closely following Revolutionary War proves how easily and readily when their feelings were involved the Americans could raise far greater supplies. And surely had Lord Chatham's scheme prevailed their feelings would have been involved. They would have been pleased and proud to show that their previous refusal to pay taxes sprung from principle and not from inability or disaffection, and that when once their views of principle had been complied with they could contribute with no sparing hand to the exigencies of their countrymen and to the service of their King.

The scheme of Lord Chatham, though rejected with so little ceremony by the Ministers, was not without its influence on the Ministers themselves. It may have left impervious Lord Sandwich or Lord Gower, but it seems to have convinced Lord North at least and Lord Dartmouth of the necessity of attempting a pacific overture. Only a few days afterwards Dr. Franklin to his great surprise received indirectly some communications of that nature from the Government. Some time before he had become acquainted with Mrs. Howe, a worthy maiden lady, with whom he used to play at chess. At her house and at her request he had several interviews with her brother, Admiral Lord Howe, the same who was afterwards appointed to the chief command in North America. Even already Lord Howe stood high in the confidence of the Cabinet. Another channel for discussion with Dr. Franklin was Mr. David Barclay, a friend of Lord Dartmouth and Lord Hyde. Much earnest conver-

\* Parl. Hist. vol. xviii. p. 222.

sation passed between them on a paper of "Hints" tending to an adjustment of the differences, which Franklin had drawn up. His main point, besides an absolute repeal of the obnoxious Statutes, was that in time of war, and on requisition from the King, each province should be bound to raise money for the public service through its own Assembly, and in proportion according to the rate of the land tax which might be imposed in England. But Franklin had added some other conditions, which even in Lord Chatham's judgment were wholly inadmissible, as that none of the King's troops should enter or quarter in any Colony but with the consent of its legislature. At last, notwithstanding the utmost zeal and pains both in Mr. Barclay and Lord Howe, it was found impossible to agree upon the terms desired; and on the 20th of February Lord North with little or no previous notice brought forward in the House of Commons a conciliatory scheme of his own.

This conciliatory scheme as it was called proved to be, however, no more than a Resolution of the House of Commons purporting: That if the Legislature of any of the American provinces should propose to make some provision for the common defence and also for the civil government of that province, and if such proposal should be approved of by the King and Parliament, it would be proper to forbear while such provision lasted from levying or imposing any tax, duty, or assessment within the said province. This conditional renunciation of the right of taxation, though still left dependent on the approval in each case of the King and Parliament, would have been of service in the earlier stages of the contest. But in the crisis to which matters had grown who could reasonably expect it to prevail? From the communications with Dr. Franklin and from some other circumstances there is reason to believe that in framing this scheme the Minister's first views had taken a wider range, and that he had agreed to curtail it in compliance to the Bedford section of his party. Even in its maimed or mutilated form his Resolution did not pass without some dread of these, not quite friendly, friends. Gibbon who had recently entered Parliament thus describes the scene: "Last Monday a conciliatory motion of allowing the Co-

“lonies to tax themselves was introduced by Lord North  
“in the midst of lives and fortunes, war and famine.”  
“We went into the House in confusion, every moment  
“expecting that the Bedfords would fly into rebellion  
“against those measures. Lord North rose six times to  
“appease the storm, but all in vain; till at length Sir  
“Gilbert (Elliot) declared for administration, and the  
“troops all rallied under their proper standard.”\*

If even any well grounded hopes of peace could have proceeded from this Resolution when separately viewed, those hopes would have disappeared on considering the other measures with which it came attended. Already had Lord North proposed, and there was then passing through both Houses, a Bill for restraining the commerce of the New England provinces with Great Britain, Ireland, and the West Indies, and prohibiting them for a limited time from any share in the fishery on the banks of Newfoundland, with certain exceptions to be made by the Governors in favour of their friends and partisans. This measure was framed in retaliation of the Non Importation and Exportation agreement, in which the New England provinces had taken the lead; the argument being that since they refused to continue their trade with this country, we had a right to prevent their trade with any other. This measure, according to a phrase current at the time, was in fact an extension of the Boston Port Bill; an extension of its penalties from one city to four provinces. This measure, I need scarcely say, or still less show, was calculated in no slight degree to heap fresh fuel on the flames already burning in America. With such a measure which another Act of this same Session extended to other provinces besides New England) any project of conciliation, according to the judgment passed upon it on the other side of the Atlantic, would be little better than a mockery.—A far more suitable accompaniment to that measure was afforded in the votes taken at this time for increasing the sea forces by 2,000, and the land forces by 4,300 men.

A few weeks afterwards the eloquence of Chatham

\* To Mr. Holroyd, February 25 1775. Gibbon's Miscellaneous Works.



(not perhaps his political courage or sagacity) was rivalled in the other House. On the 22d of March Mr. Burke moved certain Resolutions as the basis of conciliation with America. Though pointing in the same direction as Lord Chatham, these Resolutions were of far less bold and comprehensive character. Omitting all mention of the Congress, they declared in general terms the propriety of repealing several of the recent Acts,—of appointing the Judges during good behaviour,—of improving the Admiralty Courts,—and of leaving to the Provincial Assemblies the right of taxation. A long debate ensued, but finally these Resolutions were negatived by a large majority—270 votes against 78. Burke's own speech on this occasion, as shortly afterwards reported and published by himself, may deserve to be ranked among the master-pieces of oratory from whatever age or whatever country derived. In this justly celebrated composition, and amidst its galaxy of beauties, no passage perhaps is entitled to higher admiration than the one portraying the friend in early days of Pope and Swift,—the father of Lord Chancellor Apsley,—the still surviving veteran Earl Bathurst. The growth of our commercial and colonial prosperity, said Burke, has happened within the short period of the life of man. There are those alive—Lord Bathurst for example—whose memory might touch the two extremes. “Suppose then that in 1704,”—thus did Burke continue,—“Suppose, Sir, that the angel of this auspicious youth, foreseeing the many virtues which made him one of the most amiable as he is one of the most fortunate men of his age, had opened to him in vision that when in the fourth generation the third prince of the House of Brunswick had sat twelve years on the throne of that nation, which by the happy issue of moderate and healing councils was to be made Great Britain, he should see his son, Lord Chancellor of England, turn back the current of hereditary dignity to its fountain, and raise him to a higher rank of peerage, whilst he enriched the family with a new one,—if amidst these bright and happy scenes of domestic honour and prosperity that angel should have drawn up the curtain and unfolded the rising glories of his country, and whilst he

“ was gazing with admiration on the then commercial  
“ grandeur of England the Genius should point out to  
“ him a little speck, scarce visible in the mass of the na-  
“ tional interest, a small seminal principle rather than a  
“ formed body, and should tell him: ‘ Young man, there  
“ ‘ is America, which at this day serves for little more  
“ ‘ than to amuse you with stories of savage men and  
“ ‘ uncouth manners, yet shall before you taste of death  
“ ‘ show itself equal to the whole of that commerce which  
“ ‘ now attracts the envy of the world. Whatever Eng-  
“ ‘ land has been growing to by a progressive increase of  
“ ‘ improvement, brought in by varieties of people, by  
“ ‘ succession of civilizing conquests and civilizing set-  
“ ‘ tlements in a series of seventeen hundred years, you  
“ ‘ shall see as much added to her by America in the  
“ ‘ course of a single life,’— If this state of his country  
“ had been foretold to him, would it not require all the  
“ sanguine credulity of youth, and all the fervid glow of  
“ enthusiasm, to make him believe it? Fortunate man,  
“ he has lived to see it! Fortunate indeed if he lives to  
“ see nothing that shall vary the prospect and cloud the  
“ setting of his day!” \*

\* Speech of Burke, March 22. 1775. On the 16th of September following, and at ninety-one years of age Lord Bathurst died.

## CHAPTER LII.

THE winter in Massachusetts had passed gloomily, amidst the din of controversies and the preparations for strife; the scene resembling two adverse camps in presence far rather than one united Colony. At Boston the Governor and the Governor's principal adherents maintained their station surrounded by the Royal troops. At Cambridge, on the other side of the bay, and afterwards at Waterton, an opposite authority, a new Provincial Congress, had assembled, with the popular feeling in their favour, and with several thousands of Militia or Minute-men under their command. No pains were spared by them both to increase and discipline this force. They passed Resolutions for the providing or making of fire-arms and bayonets; they decreed an issue of bills of credit; they formed a provincial arsenal at Concord, about eighteen miles inland; they exhorted the Militia to perfect themselves as speedily as possible in military exercises, and denounced all those who should presume to supply the troops of their Sovereign with building or military stores. But the most determined of all their measures was to enlist in their service a company of Minute-men from among the Stockbridge Indians residing in their province. Further still, they directed the writing of a secret letter, — and secret it has been kept for more than fifty years, — to a Missionary much esteemed by the Indians in the western parts of New York, entreating "that you will use your influence with them to join with us in the defence of our rights;" — in other words, to assail and scalp the British soldiers.\* — It is worthy of remark

\* This letter, dated Concord, April 4. 1775, and derived from the MS. Journals of the Massachusetts Congress, may be seen at length in the Appendix to Mr. Sparks's edition of Washington's Writings, vol. iii. p. 495. The pretext assigned for the application was a rumour "that those who are inimical to us in Canada have been tampering with these nations," — an assertion very easy to make.

that the Massachusetts delegates, the framers of this very letter, were among those who expressed the highest astonishment and indignation when at a later period a similar policy was adopted on the British side.

About a fortnight from the date of this letter, and towards the middle of April, General Gage determined to attempt the destruction of the stores collected at Concord. With this view he sent out a detachment of several hundred light troops under the command of Major Pitcairn and Lieutenant-Colonel Smith. In the night of the 18th these troops were conveyed in boats to the opposite shore. The utmost pains had been taken to keep the expedition secret; nevertheless the men had advanced only a few miles inland when it was perceived from the firing of guns and the ringing of bells that their purpose was known, and that the country was alarmed. In fact Dr. Warren, a physician and patriot at Boston, had succeeded in sending out messengers with early information. Marching all night the first ranks about five o'clock in the morning of the 19th reached Lexington, a small town about fifteen miles from Boston. Here they found a body of Militia belonging to the town and neighbourhood, amounting to seventy men, drawn out on the parade and under arms. It afterwards appeared that these arms, or some of them at least, were loaded. Major Pitcairn, who led the van, galloped up to inquire the cause of their assemblage. It is stated by the one side, but not acknowledged by the other, that he addressed them as "you rebels!" Certain it is that he bade them lay down their arms and disperse. The Americans showed no disposition to relinquish their arms, but they did begin to break their ranks and retire from the ground. Then it was that some firing occurred. According to the accounts of the British several muskets were discharged at them from behind a stone wall and from some adjoining houses, which wounded one man and shot Major Pitcairn's horse in two places; upon which they returned the fire. The Americans state, on the contrary, that the British fired first and without provocation. Be that fact as it may, several of the Americans were now killed and wounded; and such was the first encounter, the first bloodshed, in this unhappy civil war.

The British detachment now pressed forward to Concord. Here they had leisure to spike three cannon, and to cast into the river five hundred pounds of ball and sixty barrels of flour, but they found that the greater part of the stores was already removed. Having thus, so far as they could, fulfilled their mission, they commenced their retreat. But by this time the whole country was in arms; Militia-men pouring in from all directions hung on their flank and rear, and galled them by an irregular but incessant fire. The number of such assailants continually increased; and before the British, now exhausted with long marching, could again reach Lexington their retreat had grown into a rout. Their utter destruction would have ensued had not General Gage, to guard against any adverse turn of fortune, sent forward that very morning another detachment under Lord Percy to support them. That new force they found just arrived at Lexington. Here Lord Percy's men formed a hollow square, into which the British of the first detachment flung themselves at full length, utterly spent with fatigue, says one of their own Commissaries, and "their tongues hanging out of their mouths like those of dogs after a chase!"\* After some brief interval for rest and refreshment the whole united force, amounting to eighteen hundred men, continued the retreat, and towards sunset reached the shores of Boston Harbour, harassed all the way by the Americans fire from behind stone walls, and every other place of ambush. Their total loss in killed, wounded, and prisoners was 273, while that of the Americans did not exceed 90. It was said (though in all probability the jest was not devised till afterwards) that as Lord Percy marched forward in the morning he had bid his band, in defiance of his adversaries, play the air of YANKEE-DOODLE; but that as he retreated in the afternoon the Americans called out for CHEVY-CHASE!†

\* Stedman's History of the American War, vol. i. p. 118.

† Grahame's History of the United States, vol. iv. p. 374. In my Appendix will be found, as derived from the State Paper Office, the Report of Colonel Smith to Governor Gage on the whole transaction. This officer, it will be seen, distinctly charges the Americans with having "scalped and otherwise ill-treated one or two of our men

This affair, as is well observed by an American historian, was trivial in itself, though in its consequences of the utmost importance.\* The Americans at the time proclaimed it as their glorious victory in the "battle of Lexington;" for it is worthy of note that through the whole ensuing war they were inclined to give the name of "battle" to almost every action which occurred, even down to a slight skirmish. In the case of Lexington the greatest exaggerations flew from mouth to mouth, and from pen to pen. The retreat of the British troops to Boston, which was always intended as soon as they had accomplished the object of their march, was held forth as an undesigned and ignominious flight before a conquering enemy, and their far greater loss in killed and wounded was ascribed to the military prowess of their adversaries, and not to the plain fact that these adversaries were practised marksmen, and had fired from places of ambush. Such highly coloured representations of the conflict removed the doubts of the wavering, while the conflict itself added ardour to the resolute. From all parts of Massachusetts the Militia-men flew to arms, and flocked to the popular standard. In the other New England provinces a similar spirit was roused. Thus in Connecticut a brave and deserving officer, Colonel Israel Putnam, had since the peace retired to cultivate a farm and also to keep a tavern.† The Lexington news was brought him while he was dressed in a leathern frock and apron, and working at the stone fences of his land. He hastened home, mounted his horse, and by sunrise the next morning was at Concord. There he was soon afterwards appointed to head three thousand men who had followed from Connecticut. In this manner a force

"who were either killed or severely wounded, this being seen by a party that marched by soon after."

\* Marshall's *Life of Washington*, vol. ii. p. 185. ed. 1805.

† Gordon's *History*, vol. ii. p. 2. "Such a junction," adds Dr. Gordon, "is frequent in New England, and not at all inconsistent with a Roman character." Yet this latter point of the tavern is, I scarce know why, (for what possible discredit could it bring?) eluded—that is, neither affirmed nor denied,—in the recent biography of General Israel Putnam by his countryman Mr. Oliver Peabody (Boston, 1837).



amounting, on paper at least, to twenty thousand men, was speedily collected around Boston harbour. The chief command was vested in, or rather was allowed to, Colonel Artemas Ward, with the rank of Major General. Under his direction a long line of blockade was formed. On the other hand General Gage had not as yet received his expected reinforcements from England. The works which he had constructed on the Neck secured him from assault, but he durst not stir beyond them, and found himself encompassed on every side by foes. And thus by a singular turn of fortune the town of Boston, which had been the principal hot-bed of disaffection, became the chief stronghold of the Royal troops.

Such being the state of Boston, many of the inhabitants were desirous to leave the town, which General Gage agreed that they might do with their families and effects on giving up their arms. Neither party appears to have fulfilled their part in this agreement. General Gage complained that the arms had not been faithfully delivered; and he further contended that the word "effects" was never meant to include merchandise. On the other part the people ill-affected to the Government declared, and not without some show of reason, that the main object of Gage was to retain them or their families as hostages within his hands. In the result therefore but few of the desired passports were accorded.†

It was not only by sending auxiliaries to Massachusetts that the people of Connecticut displayed their zeal. Some leading men in that province,—as Wooster and Silas Deane,—deeming war inevitable or resolved to make it so, formed the project of marching across the frontier of New York, and surprising the forts of Ticonderoga and Crown Point on Lake Champlain. Some forty volunteers well supplied with arms and money set out in secret for this object. Near the Green Mountains they received an accession of almost three hundred men under Colonel Ethan Allen, an active partisan of that district, who now assumed the command in chief. Further onward they were also joined by Benedict Arnold, lately a druggist and horsedealer at Newhaven, who had received a commission as Colonel from the Massachusetts

Congress.\* Thus stealthily advancing they reached the shores of Lake Champlain. Captain De La Place, the commander at Ticonderoga, had under him forty-four soldiers, but believed himself in profound peace and most complete security. Early on the morning of the 10th of May he was surprised in bed by Ethan Allen and required to surrender. "By what authority?" said the astonished commander. "I demand it," answered Allen, "in the name of the Great Jehovah and of the "Continental Congress!" The summons though unusual could not be resisted; and in like manner the fort at Crown Point, which indeed had but twelve men for its garrison, was suddenly seized. And further still, the *Enterprise* sloop, the only vessel of the Royal Navy on Lake Champlain, yielded to the skill and energy of Arnold.

It is diverting to find several British writers, misled by Allen's birthplace in New England, and by his summons "in the name of the Great Jehovah," describe him as a formal or fanatic Puritan. So far from this he was not even a believer in the Christian Revelation, but composed a book against it, entitled "Reason the only Oracle of Man." The void left in his mind by religious truth was, as we often see it, filled by silly fancies. According to some of his biographers he was wont to assure his friends that he expected to return to this life, not indeed once more as a biped, but in the form of a "large white horse!"†

The same day on which the Americans surprised Ticonderoga beheld the meeting of their second Congress at Philadelphia. Early in the year Lord Dartmouth had issued a Circular to the Governors of the several Colonies enjoining them to prevent, if possible, the election of delegates to that Congress as highly displeasing to the King. Nevertheless the elections took place without hindrance and without hesitation in the twelve Colonies which had already combined for that object. Dr. Franklin had arrived at Philadelphia on the 5th of May, and the very next morning by an unanimous vote

\* Sparks's *Life of Arnold*, p. 8. and 14.

† See his *Life* by Sparks, p. 351. ed. 1834.

of the Assembly of the province he was added to the number of its delegates to Congress. Considering how long he had resided in the mother country, and how many of her leading statesmen he had seen and known, his testimony as to their real views and feelings was of course much relied on. And throwing as he did promptly and keenly his whole weight into the scale most adverse to Great Britain, his unfavourable representations and predictions had probably no little influence in making that scale preponderate.

Inflamed still further by the recent events at Lexington, the second Congress met in no complying humour. They chose for their President first Peyton Randolph, and on his retirement soon afterwards John Hancock, the owner of the Liberty sloop at Boston. They assumed as their future title THE UNITED COLONIES. They rejected with little ceremony the conciliatory proposition of Lord North, which indeed had been already tossed aside by most of the Provincial Assemblies. They prohibited the export of provisions to the British fisheries, or to any Colony which still continued in obedience to Great Britain,—a measure which, as they intended, was productive for the time of great distress. In like manner they forbade the supply of any necessaries to the British army or navy in Massachusetts Bay, and the negotiation of bills of exchange drawn by any British officer. They declared that no obedience was due to the Act of Parliament repealing the Charter of Massachusetts, and they recommended to the people of that province until their Charter should be restored to elect an Assembly and Council, and exercise all powers of government on their own authority.

Votes such as these, especially with the temper by this time raised in England, could not be maintained without supplies both of men and money. For these the Congress early made provision. With respect to pecuniary means they decided to issue notes on their joint credit, or, as it was termed, Continental paper money, to the amount in the first instance of two millions of Spanish dollars. Such was the resource on which, rather than on free gifts or fresh taxes, the Americans mainly relied during the remainder of the contest. Considering the subsequent extension of their national

wealth, and the great pride which they have ever felt in the origin and event of their Revolutionary War, it might be supposed that all the obligations contracted in and for that war had been promptly and punctually discharged. This, however, has by no means been the case. So lately as 1818 an English traveller in the United States observes: "The nation have not redeemed their notes, nor I presume will they ever. I boarded at the house of a widow lady in America whose whole family had been utterly ruined by holding these notes."\*

With respect to a military force the Congress began with an unanimous vote "that these Colonies be immediately put into a state of defence." They determined to raise and take into their pay new bodies of men to be distinguished from the Provincial Militia of each Colony, and to be called the Continental Troops,—a distinction and a name which it is essential to bear in mind through the whole remaining period of this war. Their next object was to appoint some person Commander-in-Chief not only of their principal army now engaged in the blockade of Boston, but also of all other armies raised or to be raised in North America. The right choice of such an officer was indeed, as they felt it, most vitally important to them,—the very corner-stone in the new structure that they sought to rear. Such a choice if well-directed might prosper, but if injudicious could not fail utterly to sink and ruin, their design. It was in a happy hour for themselves, and for their cause, that their choice fell on Colonel George Washington.

George Washington was born in 1732. His great grandfather, John Washington, had settled in Virginia about eighty years before, and was descended from an old gentleman's family in England. There was a common descent between them and the Earls of Ferrers†,

\* Fearon's Sketches of America, p. 154. ed. 1819. From June 1775 till November 1779 the total amount of the paper money emitted by the Congress was nominally two hundred millions of dollars. The real depreciation did not commence till the spring of 1777, but increased so rapidly that the last issue of ten millions in November 1779 was held equivalent at most to only 259,000 in specie. See some further details in the Memoirs and Correspondence of Jefferson, vol. i. p. 412.

† Extract from the STEMMATA SHIRLEIANA as communicated to

whose ancient device—three Mullets above two Bars Argent—as blazoned in the Herald's College, and as borne by that line of Earls, appears no less on the seal of the American General. He was the eldest son of his father's second marriage, and lost that father when only eleven years of age. His education was almost confined to geometry, trigonometry, and surveying, since his friends, it appears, when they could not prevail on his mother that he should enter the Royal Navy, designed and prepared him for the profession of Surveyor, one of the most lucrative in a newly settled country, though happily for that country the profession of arms was finally preferred. No aid was derived by him at any period from any other than his native tongue. He never even commenced the study of the ancient classics. The latest and best of his biographers informs us that when in the Revolutionary war the French officers came over he bestowed some attention on their language, but at no time could write or converse in it, or translate any paper from it.\*

The passion of love, but of a pure and lofty kind, found early entrance in his breast. When only sixteen, and on a visit to Lord Fairfax in Virginia, he writes as follows to a friend: "There is a very agreeable young lady in the house. But that only adds fuel to the fire, as being often and unavoidably in company with her revives my former passion for your Lowland beauty; whereas were I to live more retired from young women I might in some measure alleviate my sorrow by burying that chaste and troublesome passion in oblivion; and I am very well assured that this will be the only antidote or remedy."†

For three years at this period, that is until almost twenty, Washington was constantly occupied, when the season would allow, in surveying wild lands among the Allegany mountains, or on the southern branches of the Potomac. He says in one passage of his correspondence:

me by Evelyn Philip Shirley, Esq. Both the late and the present Earls Ferrers (the former born in 1760) were christened WASHINGTON.

\* Life by Jared Sparks, p. 10. ed. 1839.

† Writings edited by Sparks, vol. ii. p. 419.

“ Since you received my letter of October last I have not slept above three or four nights in a bed, but after walking a good deal all the day I have lain down before the fire upon a little hay, straw fodder, or a bear-skin, whichever was to be had, with man, wife, and children, like dogs and cats,—and happy is he who gets the berth nearest the fire ! ”

Engaging at nineteen in the Virginian Militia Washington was forthwith appointed Adjutant General of one of the districts, with the rank of Major and the pay of 150*l.* a year. In his first campaign of 1754 I have already had occasion to relate how he was overpowered and compelled to capitulate by a party of French.\* But no blame attached to his conduct; on the contrary, the House of Burgesses of Virginia passed a vote of thanks to him and his officers “ for their bravery and gallant defence.” Next year he was a witness of Braddock’s disaster, but again with honour to himself; he had four bullets through his coat and two horses killed under him.† Almost immediately afterwards he was named Colonel and commander of the whole Virginian force. In this post his behaviour was such as to gain the respect and affection of all his officers, who presented to him an address expressive of their deep regret when at the close of 1758 he determined on resigning his commission and retiring into private life.

A few days later—in January 1759—the main motive of his resolution became apparent by his marriage with Mrs. Martha Custis, a widow, who is described by his biographer as both handsome and accomplished. To his fortune, already not inconsiderable, she brought an accession of above one hundred thousand dollars. With this lady Washington established himself at his country-house on the banks of the Potomac, which he had inherited from his elder brother, and which in compliment to the Admiral under whom that brother served at Carthageua had been named Mount Vernon. Mrs. Washington had no children by the Colonel—a title that he still retained. He was always tenderly attached

\* Vol. iv. p. 44.

† To his brother, July 18. 1755.



to her, and exemplary in that relation of life as in every other.

In his correspondence of that period he says: "I am now, I believe, fixed at this seat with an agreeable partner for life, and I hope to find more happiness in retirement than I ever experienced amidst the wide and bustling world." He mentions in the same letter, "the longing desire which for many years I have had of visiting the great metropolis of England."—"But," he adds, "I am now tied and must set inclination aside."\*

It is remarkable that his letters at that time, and until the Colonial storm had burst, frequently use the word "home" to designate the mother country.†

During many years did Washington continue to enjoy the pleasures and fulfil the duties of an independent country gentleman. Field-sports divided his time with the cultivation and improvement of his land and the sales of his tobacco; he showed kindness to his dependents, and hospitality to his friends; and having been elected one of the House of Burgesses in Virginia, he was, whenever that House met, exact in his attendance. To that well-regulated mind nothing within the course of its ordinary and appointed avocations seemed unworthy of its care. His ledgers and day-books were kept by himself; he took note of all the houses where he partook of hospitality, so that not even the smallest courtesies might pass by unremembered; and until his press of business in the Revolutionary War he was wont every evening to set down the variations of the weather during the preceding day. It was also his habit through life, whenever he wished to possess himself perfectly of the contents of any paper, to transcribe it in his own hand, and apparently with deliberation, so that no point might escape his notice. Many copies of this kind were after his death found among his manuscripts.‡

We may observe, however, that in the mind of Washington punctuality and precision did not, as we often find them, turn in any degree to selfishness. On the contrary,

\* To Richard Washington, September 20. 1759.

† As April 5. 1769, and in several other passages.

‡ Writings, vol. ii. p. 505. and Introduction to that volume, p. xii.

he was rather careless of small points where only his own comfort was concerned. Thus he could seldom be persuaded to take any remedy, or desist from any business, whenever he caught a cold, but used to say, "let it go as "it came!"\*

Nor yet was his constant regularity of habits attended by undue formality of manner. In one of his most private letters there appears given incidentally, and as it were by chance, a golden rule upon that subject:—"As to the "gentlemen you mention I cannot charge myself with incivility, or what in my opinion is tantamount, ceremonious "civility."†

In figure Washington was strongly built and tall (above six feet high), in countenance grave, unimpassioned, and benign. An inborn worth, an unaffected dignity, beamed forth in every look as in every word and deed. His first appearance and address might not convey the idea of superior talents; such at least was the remark of his accomplished countryman, Mr. Gallatin‡; but no man, whether friend or enemy, ever viewed without respect the noble simplicity of his demeanour, the utter absence in him of every artifice and every affectation.

The correspondence of Washington in 1765 and the succeeding years refers to the Stamp Act and to the other harsh measures from "home" (not much longer to be called so) in terms of temperate condemnation§, and his convictions were ever steadfast and decided on the Colonial side. When, however, these differences darkened, and the grim shadow of Civil War began to loom on the horizon, it has been already shown that Washington was less forward and eager than some others in declaring or declaiming against the mother country. This was afterwards alleged against him in America as a kind of charge, and some extracts from his private letters, said to be intercepted by the English, were published in corroboration of it. Such extracts were declared by himself to be false

\* Life and Writings, vol. i. App. p. 556. This carelessness as to colds was at last the immediate cause of his death.

† Letter to Joseph Reed, December 15. 1775.

‡ Sir A. Foster's Notes on the United States (unpublished). See Quarterly Review, No. cxxxv. p. 38.

§ To F. Dandridge, Sept. 20. 1765, &c. .

and spurious, and beyond all question were so, although the last American biographer of Washington allows as probable that parts of letters really written by him were interwoven with the fabrications.\* If, however, the charge itself be examined with candour, even though strictly and solely from the American side, it will be found to contain no matter of condemnation, but rather a topic of praise. Ought not a brave soldier who had known and seen the havoc of war to pause longer than any brawling civilian ere he resolves to inflict that havoc on his country? Ought not his reluctance to be stronger still when the war before him is not between nation and nation, but between the sons of the same race and the subjects of the same King? Was it not this very reluctance which in 1829 impelled the Duke of Wellington to exclaim amidst general applause, that long inured as he had been to scenes of strife, he would make any sacrifice, even of his own life, rather than expose his country to even one month of Civil War?† Mark also how brightly the first forbearance of Washington combines with his subsequent determination,—how he who had been slow to come forward was magnanimous in persevering. When defeat had overtaken the American army,—when subjugation by the British rose in view,—when not a few of the earliest declaimers against England were, more or less privately, seeking to make terms for themselves, and fitting their own necks to the yoke,—the high spirit of Washington never for a moment quailed; he repeatedly declared that if the Colonies were finally overpowered he was resolved to quit them for ever, and, assembling as many people as would follow, go and establish an independent state in the West, on the rivers Mississippi and Missouri.‡

There is a lofty saying which the Spaniards of old were wont to engrave on their Toledo blades, and which with truth and aptness might have adorned the sword of Wash-

\* Life by Jared Sparks, p. 266.

† Speech in the House of Lords, April 2. 1829.

‡ Sir A. Foster's Notes *ut supra*. See also Dr. Ramsay's History, vol. i. p. 310.

ington: NEVER DRAW ME WITHOUT REASON; NEVER SHEATH ME WITHOUT HONOUR! \*

Nor was Washington in any measure open to the same reproach as the ancient Romans, or some of his own countrymen at present,—that while eager for freedom themselves they would rivet the chains of their slave. To him at least could never be applied Dr. Johnson's taunting words: "How is it that we hear the loudest yelps for liberty among the drivers of negroes?" The views of Washington on this great question are best shown at the close of the Revolutionary War, and at a period of calm deliberation, in one of his letters to La Fayette:—"Your late purchase of an estate in Cayenne with a view of emancipating the slaves on it is a generous and noble proof of your humanity. Would to God a like spirit might diffuse itself generally into the minds of the people of this country! But I despair of seeing it. Some petitions were presented to the Assembly at its last Session for the abolition of slavery, but they could scarcely obtain a reading. To set the slaves afloat at once would, I really believe, be much inconvenience and mischief, but by degrees it certainly might, and assuredly ought to be, effected, and that too by legislative authority."†

Washington had attended the first Congress at Philadelphia, and on several occasions took part in the debates. Though never aiming at eloquence, nor even approaching a trope or a metaphor, his speeches made a strong impression on his hearers from his practical knowledge, his excellent sense, and his manifest integrity. "I never," says Jefferson, "heard either General Washington or Dr. Franklin speak ten minutes at a time, nor to any but the main point, knowing that the little ones would follow of themselves."‡ At the second Congress the remembrance of Washington's conduct at the first

\*

"No me saques sin razon,

"No me embaines sin honor."

See Captain G. Beauclerk's agreeably-written *Journey to Morocco*, p. 238. ed. 1828.

† To the Marquis de La Fayette, May 10. 1786. *Writings*, vol. ix. p. 163.

‡ *Memoirs and Correspondence*, vol. i. p. 50. ed. 1829.

combined with his military services to point him out as best qualified for the office of Commander-in-Chief. There were other considerations also. The four New England States had been the first to begin the war, and the foremost in their preparations to maintain it; so that it seemed a stroke of policy to draw in some one of the Southern States, as Virginia, more closely with them by selecting the General from that quarter. Thus all the deputies from New England, contrary to expectation, and much to the honour of their public spirit, took the lead in urging the merits of Washington; and his name being formally proposed, and a ballot called for, it appeared that he was unanimously chosen. He was to hold the rank of General-in-Chief, and receive the pay of five hundred dollars per month; and under him were named four officers with the rank of Major-General, and eight with the rank of Brigadier.

The inmost thoughts of Washington at this anxious period are shown in his letter to his wife \*, the only one of his letters to that lady which has been preserved: "You may believe me, my dear Patsy, when I assure you in the most solemn manner that so far from seeking this appointment I have used every endeavour in my power to avoid it, not only from my unwillingness to part with you and the family, but from a consciousness of its being a trust too great for my capacity, and that I should enjoy more real happiness in one month with you at home than I have the most distant prospect of finding abroad if my stay were to be seven times seven years. But as it has been a kind of destiny that has thrown me upon this service, I shall hope that my undertaking it is designed to answer some good purpose, . . . and I shall rely therefore confidently on that Providence which has heretofore preserved and been bountiful to me."

Next day after his election Washington rising from his place in the Congress expressed his cordial thanks, and undertook the high trust conferred upon him. But at the same time he declared his resolution to decline the salary proposed, and to accept no more than the repayment of his own expenses, of which he promised to keep an exact ac-

\* Dated June 18. 1775. Writings, vol. iii. p. 2.

count. To this determination with respect to pay or profit Washington steadily adhered; and thus after eight arduous years of the chief command he went out no richer than he came in, and no poorer. Mrs. Washington used to join her husband every year in winter-quarters, and return to Mount Vernon whenever the campaign commenced. To his agent at Mount Vernon we find Washington write meanwhile in the most kindly spirit: "Let the hospitality of the house with respect to the poor be kept up. Let no one go hungry away. . . . You are to consider that neither myself nor wife is now in the way to do these good offices."\*—Thus also as to the culture of his lands the General, even amidst the most stirring and eventful scenes of the war, sent most minute instructions, and required in return frequent and full reports. It was to this beloved home of Mount Vernon, and to the hope of again enjoying it, that at any brief interval of leisure the thoughts of Washington ever fondly turned. There was certainly no period in his career when he would not have joyfully exchanged—had his high sense of duty allowed him—the cares of public for the ease of private life. And this wish for retirement, strong and sincere as it was in Washington, seems the more remarkable since it was not with him, as with so many other great men, prompted in any degree by the love of literature. He was not like Cicero, when shrinking in affright from the storms which rent the Commonwealth, and reverting with fond regret to the well-stored library of Atticus, and to his own favourite little seat beneath the bust of Aristotle†;—he was not like Clarendon at Montpellier, when he turned from an ungrateful age, not worthy of his virtue, and indited for all time to come his immortal History. Neither reading nor writing as such had any charms for Washington. But he was zealously devoted to the earliest and most needful of all the toils of man,—

\* To Lund Washington, November 26. 1775. It is remarkable as a peculiarity of language at that period or in that country that Washington writing to his land-agent and own relative speaks of his intended yearly remuneration not as "salary," but as "wages."

† "Maloque in illâ tuâ sedeculâ, quam habes sub imagine Aris-  
totelis, sedere, quam in istorum sellâ curuli." (*Cic. ad Att. lib. iv. ep. 10.*)



he loved to be a feeder of flocks and a tiller of the ground.

It has been justly remarked that of General Washington there are fewer anecdotes to tell than perhaps of any other great man on record. So equally framed were the features of his mind, so harmonious all its proportions, that no one quality rose salient above the rest. There were none of those chequered hues, none of those warring emotions, in which Biography delights. There was no contrast of lights and shades, no flickering of the flame ; it was a mild light that seldom dazzled, but that ever cheered and warmed. His contemporaries or his close observers, as Mr. Jefferson and Mr. Gallatin \*, assert that he had naturally strong passions, but had attained complete mastery over them. In self-control indeed he has never been surpassed. If sometimes on rare occasions, and on strong provocation, there was wrung from him a burst of anger, it was almost instantly quelled by the dominion of his will. He decided surely, though he deliberated slowly ; nor could any urgency or peril move him from his serene composure, his calm clear-headed good sense. Integrity and truth were also ever present in his mind. Not a single instance, as I believe, can be found in his whole career when he was impelled by any but an upright motive, or endeavoured to attain an object by any but worthy means. Such are some of the high qualities which have justly earned for General Washington the admiration even of the country he opposed, and not merely the admiration but the gratitude and affection of his own. Such was the pure and upright spirit to which, when its toils were over and its earthly course had been run, was offered the unanimous homage of the assembled Congress, all clad in deep mourning for their common loss, as to "the man first in war, first in peace, and first "in the hearts of his fellow citizens."† At this day in the United States the reverence for his character is, as it should be, deep and universal, and not confined, as with nearly all our English statesmen, to one party, one pro-

\* Sir Augustus Foster's Notes (unpublished). Extracts in Quarterly Review, No. cxxxv. p. 39.

† Resolutions of Congress moved by John Marshall, December 19 1799.

vince, or one creed. Such reverence for Washington is felt even by those who wander furthest from the paths in which he trod. A President when recommending measures of aggression and invasion can still refer to him whose rule was ever to arm only in self-defence as to "the greatest and best of men!"\* States which exult in their bankruptcy as a proof of their superior shrewdness, and have devised "Repudiation" as a newer and more graceful term for it, yet look up to their great General — the very soul of good faith and honour — with their reverence unimpaired! Politicians who rejoice in seeing the Black man the property and chattel of the White, and desire to rank that state of things amongst their noblest "Institutions," are yet willing to forgive or to forget how Washington prayed to God that a spirit to set free the slave might speedily diffuse itself amidst his countrymen! Thus may it be said of this most virtuous man what in days of old was said of Virtue herself, that even those who depart most widely from her precepts still keep holy and bow down to her name.

It is worthy of note that the officers appointed by the Congress to act under Washington with the rank of Brigadier or Major-General were not all Americans by birth. — Horatio Gates was an Englishman, and a godson of Horace Walpole †, having reached the rank of Major in the British service. — Charles Lee was another Englishman, a correspondent of Burke and Charlemont ‡, and holding a Royal Commission as Colonel which he now resigned. — Montgomery, who had likewise served in our ranks, was a native of the north of Ireland.

Throughout the twelve Colonies, with only slight exceptions, the decisions of the Congress both as to measures and appointments were readily adopted and obeyed.

\* Message of President Polk, December 1847.

† On the 22d of March 1762 Walpole writes to George Montagu: "Perhaps you may think me proud. but you don't know that I had some share in the reduction of Martinico; the express was brought by my godson, Mr. Horatio Gates!"

‡ See, for example, in Hardy's Life of Charlemont the letter dated June 1. 1765, in which Lee gives *more suo* a most prejudiced and passionate account of Poland. "Were I," says he, "to call the common people brutes, I should injure the quadruped creation!"

In nearly all it may be said that the established Royal government fell without a blow. The Governors took to flight or sought refuge on board a King's ship, while their partisans found themselves far outnumbered and over-matched, and their place was supplied by Committees of Safety or by the popular chiefs of each Assembly.

The appointment of Washington as General-in-Chief took place on the 15th of June. Six days afterwards His Excellency (for thus was he addressed on service) set out to assume the command of the army engaged in the blockade of Boston. But during that interval events of no common importance had there occurred. At the close of May and beginning of June the expected reinforcements from England had arrived. They were headed by General Burgoyne, General William Howe, the brother of Lord Howe, and General Henry Clinton, officers who, as will be seen hereafter, bore a principal part in the subsequent transactions of the war. By this accession the whole force under General Gage as Commander-in-Chief was raised to nearly ten thousand men. With these troops—which were courageous and well disciplined, and which should have been well commanded,—an attack might have been made with every prospect of complete success against the bodies of American Militia, superior in mere numbers, but extended along a line of ten miles, not being as yet inured to arms, and not having as yet among them any General in whom they felt entire confidence. Either conciliation or else conquest should have been strenuously pursued. But it was the bane of England not merely on this occasion, but throughout the whole early part of this war, to have for chiefs men brave indeed and honourable, skilled in the details of the service, and zealous for Old England and King George, but in genius fitted only for a second place, not gifted by Nature with that energy and firmness essential for a chief command. Take, for instance, the career of Burgoyne. He was an illegitimate son of Lord Bingley, and had raised his fortune by a run-away match with a daughter of the Earl of Derby.\* In Por-

\* H. Walpole to the Rev. W. Mason, October 5. 1777. See the

tugal he had served with much distinction; at Preston he had been a candidate at the expense, it was said, of no less than ten thousand pounds. In war his bravery was never questioned, and in civil life he was gifted with many high accomplishments; a fluent speaker in Parliament, and an agreeable writer of plays. His comedy "The Heiress" is still acted with applause. But judging by the event at least we might be tempted to apply to him those humorous words, with which another playwright—no less a one than Lope de Vega—describes himself during his own days of soldiery,—as a man who in his youth had done nothing, and who since his youth had done less!\* Of the other chiefs some might be superior to Burgoyne, but all were far from equal to Clive; and in an evil hour for the military fame of England, though happily perhaps as sparing the protraction of an inevitable issue, Lord Clive had fallen by his own hand only six months before. There was wanting in the Cabinet that energy which enables a Prime Minister to discard the rules of seniority in the selection of a General. There was wanting in short a master-mind like Chatham's to discover and call forth a master-mind like Wolfe's.

On the arrival of his reinforcements General Gage issued a proclamation declaring martial law to be in force, but offering a free pardon to all who would lay down their arms, excepting only John Hancock and Samuel Adams, whose offences were described as too flagitious to be thus forgiven. No result of any kind attended the publication of this Manifesto, except perhaps an increase of enterprise on the part of the Americans.—Opposite to Boston stands the small town, or rather perhaps the suburb, of Charleston, severed from the capital by an arm

series of letters published in 1851, vol. i. p. 316. See also a note to Woodfall's Junius, vol. ii. p. 57. ed. 1812.

\* See the commencement of the Petition which Lope in his old age addressed to Philip IV. :

"Lope dice, Señor, que a vuestro abuelo  
 "Sirvio en Ynglaterra con la espada,  
 "Y aunque con ella entonces no hizo nada,  
 "Menos despues, mas fue valiente el zelo."

(Obras, vol. xvii. p. 401.)

of the sea, which for breadth has been compared to the Thames at London Bridge. Charleston, like Boston itself, is built at the extremity of a peninsula, which is joined to the Continent by a neck or narrow strip of land. Within this peninsula of Charleston the ground rises in two uneven ridges; the one nearest to Boston called Breed's Hill; the other, more remote, Bunker's Hill. Important as this position appeared to the security of Boston it had hitherto been neglected by General Gage. The Americans, more alert, now resolved to occupy it. On the evening of the 16th of June they sent a body of their Militia along Charleston Neck, with directions to intrench themselves on Bunker's Hill. The troops marched accordingly, but by some mistake as to their orders they, instead of Bunker's, took possession of Breed's Hill. Working all night they threw up a square redoubt on the summit of the ground; working so secretly, however, as not to give the least alarm to several ships of war that were anchored at no great distance from them. When on the morning of the 17th the break of day discovered their position, a heavy cannonade was opened upon them from the Lively sloop, and from Copp's Hill in Boston: but this the Americans sustained very calmly, and in spite of it completed their intrenchment.

As the position of Breed's Hill overlooked the town of Boston, General Gage thought it necessary to drive the Americans from it. With this view he sent over in boats a division of his army commanded by General Howe. The troops landed towards noon, but perceiving the Americans wait for them with firmness, General Howe applied for a reinforcement, which was despatched accordingly, and which raised his whole numbers to above two thousand men. During this interval the Americans also received from their main army a large accession of force, led on by Dr. Joseph Warren the physician of Boston, who had lately become the President of the Massachusetts Congress, and been raised (by his own authority in fact) to the rank of Major General.—Then all preparations being completed, the British troops slowly advanced up the hill, formed in two lines and under cover of a heavy fire of cannon and howitzers. Their

right was headed by General Howe; their left by Brigadier General Pigot. As the left marched forward it was greatly galled in flank by musketry from Charleston, a body of American riflemen having been posted in the houses; upon which by Howe's order the town was set on fire and destroyed; an act afterwards urged against the English, though surely without good reason, as a wanton and barbarous outrage. Over these painful scenes of civil strife and desolation was poured the unclouded effulgence of a mid-day and mid-summer sun. General Burgoyne, who was gazing upon them from one of the batteries at Boston, has described them in a private letter with no slight dramatic force. "And now," says he, "ensued one of the greatest scenes of war that can be conceived. If we look to the height Howe's corps, ascending the hill in the face of intrenchments and in a very disadvantageous ground, was much engaged; to the left the enemy pouring in fresh troops by thousands over the land; and in the arm of the sea our ships and floating batteries cannonading them; straight before us a large and noble town in one great blaze;—and the church-steeple being timber were great pyramids of fire above the rest—behind us the church-steeple and heights of our own camp covered with spectators of the rest of our army which was engaged; the hills round the country also covered with spectators; the enemy all in anxious suspense; the roar of cannon, mortars, and musketry; the crash of churches, ships upon the stocks, and whole streets falling together to fill the ear; the storm of the redoubts with the objects above described to fill the eye; and the reflection that perhaps a defeat was a final loss to the British empire in America to fill the mind; made the whole a picture and a complication of horror and importance beyond anything that ever came to my lot to witness."\*

When the English approached the summit of Breed's Hill the Americans encountered them with great coolness and determination, reserving their fire till within eighty or a hundred yards and then pouring it with deadly aim.

\* General Burgoyne to Lord Stanley, June 25. 1775. This letter appeared in the newspapers of the day, and will be found reprinted in the American Archives.



Then were blown to the winds the silly predictions of Lord Sandwich and Colonel Grant as to the alleged deficiency of courage in the Colonists; predictions which, besides being in this case utterly false and groundless, have always a manifest tendency to defeat themselves. Such predictions, it is plain, had not been forgotten by those whose honour they assailed. It is said that when one of the English regiments drew nearer than the rest many of the Americans opposite called out to its commanding officer, "Colonel Abercrombie, are the Yankees cowards?"—and most clearly they were not. On the other hand the British troops had grievous odds against them. By the unskilful direction of their chiefs they were encumbered with three days' provision, and their knapsacks on their backs. Under this heavy load and beneath a burning sun they had toiled up a rugged hill covered with long grass reaching to their knees and intersected by various fences and inclosures; and instead of being brought to attack the American force in flank, which would have been equally effectual for dislodging it, they had been led on directly in front, where the ascent was steepest and where the intrenchment was strongest. With these previous disadvantages, and now exposed to the close and well-directed fire of their enemy, they wavered, gave way, and fell back in disorder towards the landing place. Here they were quickly rallied by their officers, and a second time led up to the charge. But by another blunder of those placed in authority over them, a supply of ball for the field artillery being sent from the ordnance department at Boston was found to be of larger dimensions than fitted the calibres of the guns; and this oversight of course prevented the further use of the field artillery that day. Again did the Americans from behind their intrenchments pour upon them a destructive fire. Again were they repulsed and driven in confusion down the hill. At this critical moment General Clinton, without waiting for orders, put himself at the head of a small detachment (two battalions) which hastened over in boats from Boston. The reinforcement though small was most seasonable, and the presence of Clinton himself proved of material service in rallying the soldiers and preparing them for another onset. To that onset, the

third and last, weary as they were, they rushed up with irresistible impetuosity and carrying the enemy's redoubt at the point of the bayonet. By this time the Americans' supply of powder had begun to fail; still they fought on bravely, and even, it is said, maintained the contest with their clubbed muskets, until at last they were dislodged and put to flight. Though retreating in utter disarray there was no more than a show of pursuit against them, but they suffered severely in passing Charleston Neck from the cross fire of two floating batteries and of the Glasgow man-of-war. And thus, only changing the numbers but retaining the phrase of a gallant officer in relating another gallant exploit, we may say that, "the remnant of five and "twenty hundred unconquerable British soldiers stood "triumphant on the fatal hill!"\*

Such was the battle which not quite aptly, considering the disposition of the ground, has received from the neighbouring height the name of Bunker's Hill. The loss of the British was immense considering their number engaged. Of that number wellnigh one half had fallen; above 220 killed; above 820 wounded. The Americans as having fought from behind intrenchments suffered far less severely; according to their own account their entire loss in killed and wounded was under 450. None among their slain was more lamented than their Doctor-General Warren; a man in the prime of life, of tried energy, great powers of persuasion, and highly promising abilities.

The Americans at that period—and some of them even to the present day—have claimed the battle of Bunker's Hill as a victory. Yet considering that the British were left in possession of the ground and maintained it for several months to come, and considering also that of six pieces of artillery which the Americans brought into action they carried away but one, there can surely be no question that according to the rules of war they must be considered as defeated.—It may be acknowledged, however, that none of the more substantial fruits of success were on this occasion gathered by the English. The peninsula of Charleston proved but a barren acquisition

\* The phrase is General Napier's, in his spirit-stirring narrative of the day of Albuera. (Peninsular War, vol. iii. p. 541.)

to them since it was comprised in the blockade of Boston by the enemy's lines. And General Washington arriving at head quarters, about a fortnight afterwards, and assuming the chief command, immediately applied himself to strengthen and support those lines by throwing up new intrenchments, stationing new outposts, and adopting every other precaution, so far as his means allowed, to hem in the British troops and prevent them from issuing forth as invaders of the open country.

Not merely did the Americans at that period boldly claim the victory at Bunker's Hill; they also indulged in the widest latitude of statement as to the relative forces there engaged. One account, for example, published in Rhode Island, swells the British to five thousand while reducing the Americans to two thousand men, — thus nearly inverting the true numbers! — But not satisfied even with this version, we find Mr. Isaac Lothrop, a member of the Massachusetts Congress, who writes two days later, desecant on "our brave little army consisting of about five hundred men at most!"\* The more judicious and candid American historians have since admitted their troops to have amounted to four thousand.† But if we may rely on the official relation addressed by General Gage to the Secretary of State, the British in this battle were opposed by "above three times their own number," — that is, by upwards of seven thousand men.‡

In this battle there was no charge or complaint against the British chiefs for want of spirit, but it is manifest that they showed a want of skill. On the American side however the officers did not upon the whole behave so bravely as the men. General Washington, on reaching the camp shortly afterwards, made a strict inquiry, and reports the result as follows in a confidential letter to the President of Congress: "Upon my arrival and since some

\* See the American Archives, vol. ii. p. 1036 and 1089.

† Marshall's Life of Washington, vol. ii. p. 214. ed. 1805.

‡ Despatch to the Earl of Dartmouth, June 25. London Gazettes, July 25. 1775. By the French the very lowest estimate is still admitted — at least in their works of fiction. Thus we find in the *Bohémienne* of M. Scribe, "— Bunker's Hill cete redoute où j'ai vu six cents Américains, décidés à mourir, se défendre contre toute l'armée Anglaise!"

“complaints have been preferred against officers for  
“cowardice in the late action on Bunker’s Hill. Though  
“there were several strong circumstances and a very  
“general opinion against them, none have been con-  
“demned, except a Captain Callender of the artillery,  
“who was immediately cashiered. I have been sorry to  
“find it an uncontradicted fact that the principal failure  
“of duty that day was in the officers, though many of them  
“distinguished themselves by their gallant behaviour.  
“The soldiers generally showed great spirit and reso-  
“lution.”\*

Even before the hostilities at Lexington the more fiery spirits in America had openly relinquished all idea of reconciliation with the mother country. So early as the 23d of March, Patrick Henry, addressing the Convention of Virginia, had in a celebrated speech exclaimed: “As  
“to peace, Sir, there is no longer any room for hope. If  
“we wish to be free—we must fight! I repeat it, Sir,  
“we must fight! An appeal to arms and to the God of  
“Hosts is all that is left us!”† But such was not the feeling of many other of the delegates, even after Lexington, when they met in Congress. With a higher sense of duty they determined to leave open the door for a reconciliation,—to forbear as long as possible from any step of aggression or attack—and to confine themselves (perhaps with rather a wide interpretation) to measures of self-defence. Only a few days after Congress had assembled, their temper on this subject had been tried. Of the expected reinforcements from England, some it was thought were destined for New York; and the delegates of that Colony by order of their constituents had applied for advice how to conduct themselves on this occasion. The Congress agreed to recommend that if the troops arrived they should be permitted to remain in the barracks so long as they behaved peaceably and quietly, but that they should not be suffered to erect fortifications

\* Letter, July 21. 1775, American Archives, vol. ii. p. 1705. This passage is altogether omitted in Mr. Sparks’s compilation. Some remarks upon the manner in which that gentleman has thought himself at liberty to deal with the original MSS. will be found in the Appendix to the present volume.—Another note in that Appendix, refers to the many conflicting American authorities on the battle of Bunker’s Hill. (1853.)

† Wirt’s Life of Patrick Henry, p. 122.

or to cut off the town from the country, and that if they should commit hostilities or invade private property, the inhabitants should defend themselves and their property and repel force by force; that meanwhile the warlike stores should be removed by the Colonists; that places of retreat in case of necessity should be provided for the women and children of New York; and that a sufficient number of men should be embodied and kept in constant readiness for protecting the inhabitants against insult or injury.

Still more marked was the feeling of the Congress when there came the news how without their sanction or knowledge the volunteers from New England had seized the forts on Lake Champlain. Unwilling to censure what was now irrevocable, the Congress agreed to accept the inadequate excuses offered on the part of these volunteers, and voted, not perhaps in perfect good faith — “Whereas there is indubitable evidence that a design “is formed by the British Ministry of making a cruel “invasion from the province of Quebec upon these “Colonies for the purpose of destroying our lives and “liberties —”. They also gave orders for removing to a place of security the cannon and the military stores which had been captured in Ticonderoga. But at the same time they resolved: “That an exact inventory be taken “of all such cannon and stores, in order that they may “be safely returned, when the restoration of the former “harmony between Great Britain and her Colonies, so “ardently wished for by the latter, shall render it prudent “and consistent with the overruling law of self-preservation.” And on the 1st of June they passed this further Resolution: “That as this Congress has nothing more in “view than the defence of these Colonies, no expedition “or incursion ought to be undertaken or made by any “Colony or body of Colonists, against or into Canada.”

At that period then the Members of Congress continued to profess, and many of them no doubt continued to feel, a sense of loyal duty to the Crown. For several months ensuing they avoided (and none more carefully than Washington) to mention the troops from England as the Royal, and called them only the Ministerial, army. On the 8th of July they signed a Petition “to the King’s



"Most Excellent Majesty," declaring themselves his dutiful subjects, and praying that His Royal magnanimity and benevolence might be interposed to direct some mode by which the united applications of his faithful Colonists might be improved into a happy and permanent reconciliation. "Notwithstanding our sufferings," they added, "our breasts retain too tender a regard for the kingdom from which we derive our origin, to request such a reconciliation as might in any manner be inconsistent with her dignity or her welfare."—This appeal, which if unsuccessful they resolved should be their last, they determined to lay before their Sovereign by the most solemn means in their power, by the hands of Mr. Richard Penn, one of the Proprietaries of the province in which they were assembled, in conjunction with the agents for the Colonies in England. Mr. Penn accordingly sailed homewards on this important mission; a mission which then and afterwards was commemorated in America by an expressive phrase—"the Olive-branch."

From the kindly and respectful but vague and general words of this Petition it is not easy to discover what terms at that juncture the Congress might wish to propose or to accept. There is no doubt that they considered as indispensable the total repeal of the late obnoxious Statutes. There is no doubt also that they desired a solemn and final compact in recognition of their rights,—a compact which might be to America what Magna Charta had been to England. As to the conditions of such a compact there is reason to believe that they intended to offer an alternative. Either they would submit as heretofore to an absolute restriction of their trade for the benefit of the mother country, but in that case they would stipulate that no further aid or contribution of any kind should ever be required from them. Or else they would agree to raise through their own Assemblies their share of revenue for the support of the whole empire, but according to a certain rate, so that the Colonies should not be taxed one farthing without a security that Great Britain must at the same time tax herself in a still heavier proportion. In that case, however, the Americans would expect to be relieved of all restraints on their trade and navigation, and be empowered to regulate such matters



without regard to any interests besides their own.\* On these terms, or on terms resembling these, there is reason to believe that even then—even after Lexington and Bunker's Hill,—the progress of civil war might have been arrested, and the integrity of the empire might have been maintained.

The Petition to the King of July 1775 was drawn up by John Dickinson and adopted mainly through his influence. I do not call in question the perfect sincerity and honour of the great majority of those who signed it. But as to one at least, Dr. Franklin, whose name appears beneath it, I may observe that its expressions of "tender regard" towards the mother country stand forth in striking contrast with some other expressions in his private correspondence. Almost on the very day that Franklin subscribed this Petition to the King he wrote as follows to a former friend in London. "Mr. Strahan : " You are a Member of Parliament and one of that majority which has doomed my country to destruction. " You have begun to burn our towns and murder our people. Look upon your hands, they are stained with " the blood of your relations! You and I were long " friends; you are now my enemy, and I am Yours, " BENJAMIN FRANKLIN."†

The Petition to the King was by no means the only document which the Congress at this period prepared. There was an Address to the people of Great Britain. There was another Address to the People of Ireland. There was a Declaration ordered to be read aloud to their assembled troops and public bodies, and setting forth in uncompromising language the causes of their taking up arms. At this very time their spirits were sustained by the accession of Georgia; an accession which had been much desired and long delayed, and which enabled them to speak henceforward in the name of the THIRTEEN UNITED COLONIES. The same shrewd observer whose dia-

\* See the American Archives, especially two letters dated June 20. 1775 (vol. ii. p. 1033.).

† July 5. 1775; Franklin's Works, vol. viii. p. 155. I can by no means concur with his last American editor in thinking of this production that "in truth it was meant to be nothing more than a "pleasantry!"

tribe to Mr. Strahan I have so lately cited bears in another letter a striking testimony to the earnestness and determination which he beheld around him. "Great frugality and great industry are now become fashionable here. Gentlemen who used to entertain with two or three courses pride themselves now in treating with simple beef and pudding. Thus we shall be better able to pay our voluntary taxes for the support of our troops."\*

The troops to which Franklin here refers were indeed in such a state as to require all the aid that zeal could prompt or that money could supply. On reaching the head quarters at Cambridge, Washington had expected to find an army of twenty thousand men; he found no more than sixteen thousand on the rolls; and of them only fourteen thousand fit for duty. Even these he was obliged to describe as "a mixed multitude of people under very little order or government." The men had no uniforms, but continued to wear the common working dresses in which they had come; a deficiency which was afterwards in some degree remedied by a supply from Congress of ten thousand hunting shirts, at the General's suggestion. "I know nothing," says he, "in a speculative view more trivial, yet nothing which, if put in practice, would have a happier tendency to unite the men and abolish their provincial distinctions."† The want of money was most severely felt. On the 21st of September Washington reports the military chest totally exhausted and the Paymaster without one single dollar in hand. For lack of commissaries the supplies of provisions were both insufficient and ill-distributed. Entrenching tools were wanted and likewise engineers. It was also found by Washington that the late action at Bunker's Hill inspired with much higher spirits those who declaimed upon it at a distance, and who by unanswerable arguments proved it an undoubted victory, than those who had closely viewed or themselves partaken in it. With a heavy heart, though with a resolute courage, Washington while making known his wants to Congress could not

\* Dr. Franklin to Dr. Priestley, Philadelphia, July 7. 1775.

† Letters to his brother, July 27. and to the President of Congress, July 10. 1775.

conceal from them that there was a total laxity of discipline among his troops, and that the greater part of them were not to be relied on in the event of another action.

It is highly to the honour of Washington, labouring under so many disadvantages, to have yet achieved so much. The active scenes which followed his arrival are well described in a private letter from one of the Chaplains in his army. — “There is great over-turning in the camp “as to order and regularity. New Lords, new laws. “The Generals Washington and Lee are upon the lines “every day. New orders from His Excellency are read “to the respective regiments every morning after prayers. “The strictest government is taking place, and great distinction is made between officers and soldiers. Every “one is made to know his place and keep in it, or be tied “up and receive thirty or forty lashes according to his “crime. Thousands are at work every day from four till “eleven o’clock in the morning. It is surprising how “much work has been done. The lines are extended “almost from Cambridge to Mystic River, so that very “soon it will be morally impossible for the enemy to get “between the works. . . . My quarters are at the foot of “the famous Prospect Hills, and it is very diverting to walk “among the tents. They are as different in their form “as their owners are in their dress, and every tent is a “portraiture of the temper and taste of the persons who “encamp in it. Some are of boards, and some of sail-cloth. Some partly of the one, and partly of the other. “Others again are made of stone and turf, brick or brush. “Some are thrown up in a hurry, others curiously wrought “with doors and windows, done with wreaths and withes, “in the manner of a basket. Some are your proper tents “and marquees, looking like the regular camp of the “enemy.” \*

There was one deficiency, however, which no skill in Washington could retrieve or atone for, and which he could only endeavour to conceal. That deficiency was

\* Letter of the Rev. William Emerson, printed in the Appendix to Mr. Sparks's Washington, vol. iii. p. 491. Washington himself speaks of “incessant labour, Sundays not excepted.” (Ibid. p. 39.)

of powder. The first statement made to him on this point by the Massachusetts officers had been quite satisfactory but quite erroneous. "They," says Washington, "not being sufficiently acquainted with the nature of a return, sent in an account of all the ammunition which had been collected by the province, so that the report included not only what was on hand but what was spent!"\* On calling for more exact returns, the General found to his amazement the stock so small as nearly to preclude him from the use of his artillery, and to leave but nine rounds of powder to each musket; and even this small stock was further reduced by the little affairs of outposts which sometimes occurred. Dr. Franklin declares that in the month of October when he visited the army, it had not five rounds of powder a man. "The world," he adds, "wondered that we so seldom fired a cannon; why we could not afford it."† Washington did not fail to make most urgent representations on this subject both to the Congress and to the neighbouring Colonies, but many weeks, nay months elapsed, before he was effectually supplied. To a brave officer scarce any position would be more painful than thus to stand in front of a numerous and disciplined enemy; daily awaiting an attack which he knew that he could not repel, and unprovided even with means to fire his own artillery in his own defence.

This deficiency of powder, in some degree at least though not to its full extent, was known to the British General. It had been disclosed by a deserter; it was moreover clearly implied in a vote of the Massachusetts Assembly: "Resolved: That it be and it hereby is recommended to the inhabitants of this Colony not to fire a gun at beast, bird, or mark without real necessity therefor."‡ Nevertheless, General Gage remained quiet in his lines. He may yet have hoped for a favourable issue from the last

\* To the President of Congress, August 4. 1775. This curious passage appears in the American Archives (vol. iii. p. 28.), but is omitted in Mr. Sparks's edition.

† Letter to Dr. Priestley, January 27. 1777. Works, vol. viii. p. 198.

‡ Resolution, August 12. 1775. American Archives, vol. iii. p. 325.

Petition of Congress to the King. He may have doubted whether, with the prevailing temper of men's minds, even the most triumphant victory in Massachusetts might not tend to exasperate far more than to subdue. But above all he must have borne in mind that the first inland movement which he had ordered — the march to Concord producing the hostilities at Lexington — had been by no means approved by the Ministers in England. Still less were they satisfied with him when there came the news of Bunker's Hill. Immediately after those tidings Lord Dartmouth wrote to recall him from his post, under the honourable plea however of desiring to consult him on the plans for the next campaign. Accordingly in the month of October General Gage took his departure from Boston, and sailed homewards, leaving by the King's direction the chief command to General Howe.\*

\* The despatches of Lord Dartmouth on the events at Lexington and Bunker's Hill (July 1. and August 2. 1775) as derived from the State Paper Office are published in both the collections of Mr. Peter Force and Mr. Jared Sparks.

## CHAPTER LIII.

IN England the tide of public feeling continued to set strongly against the conduct and the claims of the Americans. Their recent resistance was deemed no better than rebellion. Their professions of loyalty were disbelieved, and their prospects of ultimate success derided. Nothing is more certain than that at this time, and during the whole first period of the war, by far the greater part of the British people most earnestly and zealously upheld the King in his determination, according with their own, to maintain, as he and they conceived, both the rights of the Crown and the authority of Parliament. On this point — on the reality and extent of this public feeling at that juncture — the testimony from the most opposite quarters is nearly the same.—When Lord North sent over his Conciliatory Resolution, it was accompanied by a Note which he had dictated to Mr. Grey Cooper, Secretary to the Treasury, and which in its semi-official form was laid before the Congress. Among other arguments that Note states: “The temper and spirit of the nation are so much against concessions, that if it were the intention of the administration they could not carry the question.”\* We may acknowledge some exaggeration in this statement, since probably the aim of the people was to give their full support, if required, to the King and Government, and not to go beyond them; yet still this is surely no unimportant testimony to the spirit of the time. But did the members of the Opposition deny that statement? Quite the contrary, when they spoke together in confidence. In October of this year Lord Rockingham writes to Burke that his own observations have been confirmed by Lord John Cavendish, by Sir George Savile, and by several more; all owning the real fact to be “that

\* Minutes of the Continental Congress, May 30. 1775.



“ the violent measures towards America are fairly adopted  
 “ and countenanced by a majority of individuals of all  
 “ ranks, professions, or occupations in this country.”\*

To this state of public feeling the London Magistrates were however a signal exception. When in August the King issued a Proclamation for suppressing rebellion and sedition in America and preventing traitorous correspondence with that country, and when that Proclamation was read forth at the Royal Exchange, Wilkes, as Lord Mayor, would not allow the Mace to be carried, nor the usual forms of respect to be observed; and at the close of the ceremony his partisans raised a hiss.† At nearly the same time the City chiefs endeavoured to draw His Majesty into an unseemly contest, by declining to present an Address, unless the King would receive it seated on his throne. “ I am ever ready,” rejoined the King, “ to receive Addresses and Petitions, but I am the “ judge where.” There is reason to believe that even in the City the larger number disapproved this low and petty game of faction in their chiefs. Certain it is at least that loyal Addresses — declaring in strong terms attachment to the Throne and Constitution and disapprobation of the insurgent Colonies — came in at this time spontaneous and unsolicited from every part of the kingdom, — from the trading towns, as Manchester and Liverpool, no less than from the rural districts.

It was under circumstances thus unfavourable to the issue of his mission that Richard Penn brought over the “ Olive-branch ” — the Petition, namely, from Congress to the King. On the 1st of September Penn himself, accompanied by Arthur Lee, delivered it for presentation to Lord Dartmouth. His Lordship received it from their hands in silence. Three days afterwards he informed them by letter that to this Petition no answer would be given. It was deemed that since the Congress had met not only without the King’s permission but against his injunctions; since it was in fact a self-constituted body; and since it had sanctioned and directed the taking up arms against His Majesty; its authority had no claim to

\* Burke’s Correspondence, vol. ii. p. 68.

† Annual Register, 1775, p. 149.

any recognition nor its Petition to any reply. Some degree of just weight may be acknowledged as attaching to these considerations. Yet after all they amount to little more than a punctilio — a punctilio, namely, as to the rank and title of the persons petitioning — a punctilio which, as all parties when too late perceived, ought by no means to have barred a practical consideration of the Petition itself. Even then, perhaps, the terms not indeed expressed but implied in that Petition might if welcomed have averted the further growth of civil strife, and once more united together the two great branches of the British race. Its rejection on the contrary, though little considered at the time in England, was never forgotten in America. An American historian records that afterwards, when pressed by the calamities of war, a doubt would sometimes arise in the minds of many of his countrymen, whether they had not been too hasty in their resistance to their parent state. "To such minds," he adds, "it was usual "to present the second Petition of Congress to the King, "observing thereon that all the blood and all the guilt of "the war must be charged to British and not to American "counsels."\*

Discarding this last overture of reconciliation, and cheered on by the popular favour at home, the Ministers determined that Parliament should be convoked for an early day, the 26th of October, and that the King's Speech should contain no vague expressions, but a clear and explicit scheme of policy. That document accordingly was framed with no common care. It began by inveighing in strong terms against the "desperate conspiracy" and "general revolt" in North America. It called for decisive exertions, announcing a large increase both in the land and the sea forces, and consequently greater estimates. And it added that "In testimony of my affection for my "people I have sent to the garrisons of Gibraltar and "Port Mahon a part of my Electoral troops, in order that "a larger number of the established forces of this kingdom "may be applied to the maintenance of its authority." The King, it was subjoined, had received most friendly

\* Ramsay's History of the American Revolution, vol. i. p. 214. ed. 1798

offers of foreign assistance. Should he in consequence make any treaties he would not fail to lay them before his Parliament. In another paragraph His Majesty declared himself ready to receive the misled with tenderness and mercy; for which purpose he intended to give authority to certain persons upon the spot to receive the submission of any repentant Colony, and to grant general or particular pardons or indemnities in such a manner and to such persons as they should think fit.

Some men were not wanting, even among the King's official servants, to discern the danger of so extreme a course. In the month of August the Duke of Grafton had written to Lord North warmly urging the necessity of a reconciliation with America. Lord North did not reply for seven weeks; when he did it was by enclosing a Draft of the King's intended Speech.\* Hereupon the Duke came to town and resigned his post as Privy Seal. In the audience which he had of the King, as he tells us in his Memoirs, he ventured to avow his apprehensions. "I added that, deluded themselves, his Ministers were deluding His Majesty. The King vouchsafed to debate the business much at large; he informed me that a large body of German troops was to join our forces, and appeared astonished when I answered earnestly that His Majesty would find too late that twice that number would only increase the disgrace and never effect his purpose."

The retirement of Grafton gave occasion to several changes. Lord Dartmouth, as pacific in his views but less resolute in his purposes, quitted the American Secretaryship and succeeded the Duke as Privy Seal. The American Secretaryship was bestowed on Lord George Germaine, whose military knowledge and undoubted talents ill atoned to the Government for his rash and violent temper. Another of the Secretaries of State, Lord Rochford, was replaced by Lord Weymouth.

Thus freed from official ties the Duke of Grafton took a public part against the Ministers in the debate on the Address. General Conway, so lately another of their

\* The letter of Lord North to the Duke of Grafton, dated October 20. 1775, will be found in the Appendix to this volume

colleagues, likewise spoke against them in the House of Commons. In both Houses nevertheless the Government was upheld by vast majorities; and through the whole remainder of the Session the members of the Opposition were never successful though always strenuous in their efforts.—In the month of November they displayed especial activity. They examined Mr. Penn at the Bar of the House of Lords, and proceeded to move that the Petition which he had brought from Congress afforded ground of conciliation. They raised debates in both Houses against the employing foreign troops without the consent of Parliament. Defeated on these occasions by overwhelming numbers they sped no better in various motions tending to peace with America that were subsequently made by Burke and Fox, by Aldermen Sawbridge and Oliver, by David Hartley, and by the Duke of Grafton. The Government was left at full liberty to pursue its negotiations with petty German Princes for the hire of mercenary troops. It was able to carry through before Christmas a new measure, which was called the American Prohibitory Bill, and was first brought forward by Lord North himself on the 20th of November. By this Bill the Boston Port Act and the two Restraining Acts of the last Session were repealed, as no longer applicable to the altered state of things. But all trade and commerce with the thirteen insurgent Colonies was absolutely interdicted so long as their rebellion should continue. The Bill authorized the capture of American vessels or goods, making them the property of the captors. The prisoners taken on such occasions might be pressed for sailors, and sent to serve against their countrymen. Harsh as were these clauses in themselves they were no less harshly defended in argument. Thus Lord Mansfield in supporting them reminded the Peers of the saying of a Swedish General in the reign of Gustavus Adolphus, who had pointed to the enemy, and exclaimed to his own soldiers: “My lads, you see those “men yonder; if you do not kill them, they will kill “you!”\*

By this Bill moreover, in its last and, in design at least,

\* Parl. Hist. vol. xviii, p. 1102.

its more conciliatory clause, the King was authorized to send to America Commissioners selected by himself with great, nay it might almost be said unlimited, authority. They were to grant pardons, and inquire into grievances; they were to have the sole power of judging whether the whole or any part of any Colony showed a disposition to return to its allegiance, and on their so declaring it, the restrictions of the Bill as applied to that Colony or part of a Colony were at once to cease. Such then, after so many previous failures, was the new legislative weapon hurled against America. As Burke some time afterwards said, bitterly indeed but most truly,—“It affords no matter for very pleasing reflection to observe that our subjects diminish as our laws increase!”\*

It may be doubted whether the administration would have stood its ground quite so firmly, had Lord Chatham continued to launch his thunder-bolts against it. But he was now again confined to his house, nay sometimes to his couch, by illness. Again at this time do we find an almost total blank in his correspondence; no letter proceeding from himself; the few to him opened and acknowledged by Lady Chatham; only his nearest kindred admitted to see him; and only the least exciting topics mentioned in his presence. During the winter of 1775 Lord Camden, the most intimate of his friends and his neighbour in Kent, writes as follows: “Lord Chatham continues in the same melancholy way; and the house is so shut up that his sons are not permitted to receive visitors.”† His illness at this time appears to have closely resembled both in kind and duration that which had befallen him in his last administration. He had then

\* Letter to the Sheriffs of Bristol, 1777. See also the masterly Protest of Lords Abergavenny, Rockingham, &c. against this Bill (Dec. 15. 1775). I have no doubt of its being Burke's. Lord Rockingham was wholly incapable of such a composition, and on other occasions at least we find Burke employed in writing the Protests for his Lordship's party. (Burke's Correspondence, vol. ii. p. 14.) Indeed the relation between these two statesmen is best described in three words by Horace Walpole where he speaks of Burke as being “Lord Rockingham's governor!” (To Sir H. Mann, May 6. 1770.)

† To the Duke of Grafton, January 4. 1776. MS

been secluded from the world, from the spring of 1767 until the spring of 1769. Now again he was secluded from the world from the spring of 1775 until the spring of 1777, when as we shall find he once more emerged into public life with undiminished brilliancy and powers.

There was only one point of public moment on which during this second period of eclipse the will or the wish of Chatham was displayed. His eldest son, Lord Pitt, had entered the army; had become aide-de-camp to General Carleton in Canada, and in the autumn of 1775 was sent home with despatches. The question arising of his return to his post, Chatham, by the hand of his wife, intimated to General Carleton that, "from his fixed opinion with regard to the continuance of the unhappy war "with our fellow-subjects in America," he deemed it necessary to withdraw his son from such a service. Another officer of rank, a Howard, Earl of Effingham, had already on the same grounds resigned his commission also. These resignations being openly made gave matter for much public comment. That must indeed, cried the friends of the colonists, be a guilty and a wretched war, when even the Minister who conquered Canada will not allow his son to unsheath the sword for its defence!

In America the approach of winter did not arrest the progress of hostilities. Small privateers were fitted out, in several of the New England ports, to cruise against the British trade. In requital the British chiefs at Boston despatched early in October two vessels under Lieutenant Mowat with a small detachment of troops on board, and with instructions to annoy and destroy the shipping along the southward coast. Lieutenant Mowat appeared off the town of Falmouth, where, far exceeding his original instructions, he set on fire, not only the ships in the harbour but likewise the town itself. About five hundred houses were thus wantonly and cruelly consumed; and at the same time the Lieutenant was reported to have declared that general orders had been given by the British Ministry to burn the seaport towns. Such a report, not promptly contradicted, produced general and just indignation in America; rendering the spirit of resistance both more intense and more widely diffused. It appears, however, from the authentic documents which



are still preserved in the State Paper Office, and which the Americans themselves have since published, that no such orders had been given by the British Ministers—that at the destruction of Falmouth they expressed concern and surprise, and required, in a tone of reprimand, that all the particulars of this act should be promptly transmitted to them for the inspection of the King.\*

In the great southern state of Virginia Lord Dunmore had some time since retired for safety on board the Fowey man-of-war. At this period, having collected a small naval force, he made a feeble attempt to recover his lost ground. He landed at Norfolk, decreed the establishment of martial law; and issued a proclamation offering freedom to all slaves, the property of rebels, who would repair to his standard and bear arms for the King. Earlier in the contest such an offer, however desperate, might yet have been decisive. But now, the Governor having once already withdrawn from his province, the slaves might reasonably doubt his power to give effect to his intentions. Accordingly Lord Dunmore received the accession of only a few hundred negroes, whom he found an encumbrance far rather than a help. The colonists meanwhile detached a force against him, and his advanced guard under Captain Fordyce was defeated in a skirmish at Great Bridge on the 9th of December. Lord Dunmore re-embarked, leaving Norfolk in the hands of the Americans. On the plea that their riflemen upon the wharfs prevented him from obtaining supplies, but in truth with unjustifiable severity, he burned to the ground that whole town, one of the most thriving upon the Chesapeake, and containing no less than eight thousand inhabitants. He lingered for some time longer on the coast, but could achieve nothing beyond

\* See the extracts from our State Paper Office as obtained by Mr. Jared Sparks and produced by him in a valuable note; (Washington's Writings, vol. iii. p. 520.) He suspects that Admiral Graves, who had some resentment against the people of Falmouth from the obstructions which they had given to the shipment of masts, may perhaps have been implicated in the rash step of his subordinate. But Mr. Sparks adds, "No part of this reproach can rightfully attach to the British Ministry. The act had no higher source than the wounded pride of a subordinate officer coinciding with the hasty resentment of his superior in command."

this cruel act of vengeance, and at last, sending his liberated slaves to the West Indies, he quitted the shores of this once loyal and contented Colony for ever.

It was to the north, however, that the principal hopes of the Congress were at this time directed. Earlier in the year, as I have elsewhere shown, they had passed a Resolution renouncing in most explicit terms the idea of any expedition against or into Canada. This Resolution, passed on the 1st of June, was by their orders translated into French and distributed along the shores of the St. Lawrence. Yet on the 27th of the same month the same Assembly passed other Resolutions instructing Philip Schuyler, one of their new-made Generals, to proceed without delay to Ticonderaga, and, if he found it practicable, "immediately to take possession of St. John's "and Montreal, and pursue any other measures in Canada, "which might have a tendency to promote the peace and "security of these Colonies."\* The autumn came on, however, before the preparations for this object were complete, and two or three thousand men collected on Lake Champlain. Then the command devolved on General Montgomery, an officer of courage and skill, much beloved in private life for his generous and honourable qualities. Under him served Ethan Allen; whilst it was intended that Benedict Arnold, pressing forward from another quarter, should join him upon the St. Lawrence with a body of New England volunteers.

General Carleton, to whom whenever it was found convenient designs of invasion were so readily ascribed, had not in truth a sufficient force for the defence of his own province. He had refused the proffered aid of seven hun-

\* Note to Sparks's Washington, vol. iii. p. 41. These last Resolutions being kept secret are not printed in the Journals. Hard task to vindicate on this occasion either the good faith or the consistency of the American rulers! Mr. Sparks attempts it, by pleading that in the interval between their two Resolutions they had received reports that General Carleton was preparing an invasion against themselves. But the apologist forgets that, even some days previous to their Resolution of the 1st of June, they had in the most solemn manner declared themselves in possession of "indubitable "evidence" that such an invasion was designed. Look back to p. 61. of this volume.

dred warriors from the Six Nations tribe of Indians; he could muster but few French levies; and only eight hundred British troops served under his command. With means so scanty he could offer no effectual check to the advance of the Americans. They began by passing Lake Champlain and besieging the forts of Chambly and St. John's, which after a prolonged resistance they reduced. During these sieges Ethan Allen, at the head of a detachment, made an imprudent attempt to surprise the city of Montreal, but meeting a small body of British he was defeated, taken prisoner, and sent to England in irons. General Montgomery was joined by several parties of Indians whom the rejection of Carleton had offended. But among the Canadians themselves, contrary to the expectations of Congress, he found no sympathy nor succour.

Meanwhile Colonel Arnold, having repaired to the camp in Massachusetts, obtained from Washington a detachment of one thousand men. Washington also supplied him with a Proclamation to the people of Canada, and with detailed instructions for his conduct. Among these instructions we may observe the following: "If Lord Chatham's son  
"should be in Canada, and in any way fall into your  
"power, you are enjoined to treat him with all possible  
"deference and respect. You cannot err in paying too  
"much honour to the son of so illustrious a character and  
"so true a friend to America."\* At the head of his thousand men Arnold proceeded to the execution of the daring and skilful scheme which himself had formed. He ascended the river Kennebec in boats, working against a stream so strong that on an average the men waded more than half the way. "You would have taken them for  
"amphibious animals!" writes Arnold to his General. Thence, with incredible fatigue, he pierced through a dismal wilderness of swamps and woods, with sometimes a craggy height to climb, and the men carrying all the way their boats and their provisions on their shoulders. At length, amidst other perils from falls and rapids, he again embarked, descending the romantic and sequestered valley of the Chaudière. So extreme were his distresses,

\* Instructions for Colonel Benedict Arnold, Sept. 14. 1775.

that during the three or four last days of the march even dogs were killed for food and greedily devoured.\* Thus towards the middle of November the people of Quebec beheld to their amazement the remains of this hardy band emerged from the wilderness and appearing on Point Levis opposite their city. Had not the river intervened, and some time been required to provide canoes, the capital of Canada must have fallen an easy prey to Arnold in the first moments of panic and surprise. As it was, nothing saved it but the promptitude and energy of a British officer, Colonel Maclean, in marching to its rescue. Repulsed in his attempt upon the city, and apprehensive of a sally from Maclean, Arnold now retreated some twenty miles up the St. Lawrence, fixing his station at Point aux Trembles, and thus interposing between Quebec and Montreal.

At these tidings, nearly coinciding in time with the surrender of the fort at St. John's, General Carleton perceived the necessity of hastening to the succour of the capital. Leaving Montreal to its fate he assumed a fisherman's garb, embarked in a whale-boat, and made use of muffled oars. Thus he passed by night, and as it chanced without discovery, through the enemy's craft on the St. Lawrence. Thus he arrived at Quebec and thenceforth, as his scanty force required, confined himself solely to its protection and defence. On the other hand, General Montgomery, having occupied Montreal, proceeded down the river and effected his junction with Arnold at the Point aux Trembles. The whole body, under Montgomery's chief command, then advanced against the capital, and climbed the heights of Abraham, so famous for the exploit of Wolfe.

Unlike Wolfe, Montgomery did not at this period feel happy in his comrades and his cause. It is observed by one of the best American historians that "though he had embraced the American cause with enthusiasm he had become wearied of its service."† Even before he

\* Life of Arnold by Sparks, p. 41.

† Marshall's Life of Washington, vol. ii. p. 300. The faults of the American troops in Canada, officers as well as soldiers, are fully portrayed by another of their countrymen, Dr. Ramsay. (History of the Revolution, vol. i. p. 233.)

marched from Montreal he had declared his purpose of resigning his commission at the end of this campaign. So accomplished an officer could not view without disgust the insubordination and ill-conduct of his troops. The common tie of loyalty to the Crown being once removed, the soldiers from one Colony paid no respect to the officers from another, and but little to their own. Each man deemed himself the most fitting arbiter of the degree of obedience which he was bound to give. Still more did each man think himself entitled to judge of the propriety of the measures proposed to be pursued. Although by the terms of their enlistment they were to be discharged in a few weeks, there was a general desire to anticipate that period. There were complaints, not indeed unfounded, of the toilsome service and the wintry season. Even in Arnold's little band, far superior in spirit to the rest, and notwithstanding Arnold's own prowess and personal ascendancy, his rear-guard, commanded by Colonel Enos, had lost courage and gone home. There was delay in every movement, however needful; there was repining against every punishment, however just; above all there was difficulty in enforcing that order which the parting words of Washington had so wisely enjoined—to forbear most scrupulously from plundering or injuring even those who were known as enemies to their cause.

Bearing up against these and many other disadvantages with undaunted gallantry, Montgomery, before sunrise on the last day of the year and amidst a heavy fall of snow, led forward his now far diminished troops to the attack. He had ranged them in two divisions on separate sides; the one was commanded by himself; the other committed to Arnold. But, as in the case of Wolfe, they were encountered with equal bravery. A tremendous fire of grape-shot was opened upon them, and among the first who fell was Montgomery himself. Arnold also was severely wounded and carried from the field. The loss of such leaders was speedily felt by the assailants; on every side they were repulsed, and a sally being made by the garrison, nearly four hundred men belonging to Arnold's division were surrounded and made prisoners.

The Congress on learning the events before Quebec

passed a vote, with the strongest expressions of concern, that a monument should be erected to betoken "their veneration for their late General Richard Montgomery." They raised Arnold to the rank of Brigadier General, and invested him for the time with the chief command in Canada. Under such trying circumstances it was far from an enviable distinction. Thus writes Arnold himself: "Many of the troops are dejected and anxious to get home, and some have actually set off; but I shall endeavour to continue the blockade while there are any hopes of success." The blockade was accordingly continued, in name at least, through the rest of the winter; the garrison having however little real difficulty in obtaining the supplies, as of wood, which they required; and neither party choosing as yet to renew the attack upon the other.

Another blockade — that of Boston — was in like manner maintained through the winter months. Washington had deemed it feasible to attack the city in boats, and more than once brought forward a project for that purpose, but was checked by the unanimous opinion against it of his officers in a council of war. Besides the deficient supply of powder, and the other difficulties of his situation which have elsewhere been explained, he had also to strive against the evils resulting from the short periods of enlistment. These evils were such that, as Washington declares, no person who had not witnessed them could form an idea of their extent. He adds: "It takes you two or three months to bring new men acquainted with their duty: it takes a longer time to bring a people of the temper and genius of these into such a subordinate way of thinking as is necessary for a soldier. Before this is accomplished the time approaches for their dismissal, and you are beginning to make interest for their continuance for another limited period; in the doing of which you are obliged to relax in your discipline, in order as it were to curry favour with them. Thus the latter part of your time is employed in undoing what the first was accomplishing!" Washington found also that the patriotism of New England, which he had admired at a distance, was by no means so conspicuous when closely viewed. Thus he charges the Connecticut



troops with "scandalous conduct," observing of them that "a dirty mercenary spirit pervades the whole." And of Massachusetts he remarks: "Notwithstanding all the public virtue which is ascribed to these people, there is no nation under the sun, that I ever came across, which pays greater adoration to money than they do." And again, in another place: "Such a dearth of public [spirit] and want of virtue; such stock-jobbing and fertility in all the low arts to obtain advantages of one kind or another in this great change of military management, I never saw before, and pray God I may never be witness to again!"\*

No wonder if at that time, under such circumstances and with such coadjutors, this great man regretted—never indeed the cause he had espoused—but sometimes the rank he had accepted.—"Could I have foreseen what I have, and am like to, experience, no consideration upon earth should have induced me to accept this command. A regiment, or any subordinate department, would have been accompanied with ten times the satisfaction—perhaps ten times the honour."

Meanwhile the English, enclosed in Boston, had to encounter evils of another kind. The small-pox raged among them, and so ill-contrived was the commissariat that, notwithstanding their command of the sea, their supplies, both of food and fuel, were neither plentiful nor constant. It became impossible to supply fresh meat or vegetables even to the sick and wounded. It became necessary in some cases to pull down houses, that the timber might be used for firing. Many perplexities moreover arose in the mind of their General. It seemed to him that considering the enemy's works around the bay, and the thorough disaffection in the province, Boston would be a most unfavourable point from whence to issue in the ensuing spring, and begin the campaign against the insurgents. It seemed to him far preferable that the army should be embarked and directed towards New

\* Letters to Joseph Reed, Nov. 28. 1775, February 1. and 10. 1776, and to the President of Congress, Dec. 4. 1775. Most of those passages or epithets have been excluded from Mr. Sparks's compilation.

York, where means of transport were plenty, where the friends of the King were numerous, and where his standard might best be raised. Such had also been the opinion of his predecessor in office, General Gage.\* The Ministry in London, impressed by views such as these from so concurring and so competent advisers, gave their assent to them, authorizing Howe to remove the troops from Boston whenever he might judge it expedient. His own inferior officers, unapprised of this design, were rather disposed to murmur at the neglect of England. Thus writes one of them: "For these last six weeks or "near two months we have been better amused than "could possibly be expected in our situation. We had "a theatre, we had balls, and there is actually a sub- "scription on foot for a masquerade. England seems "to have forgot us, and we endeavoured to forget our- "selves."†

Such was the state of things at Boston when early in March, the rigour of the cold having somewhat abated, General Washington, having received large reinforcements, roused his troops to offensive operations. He began to throw up works on Dorchester Heights, facing the city on the side opposite to Charleston, and commanding the British lines on Boston Neck. Thus it became necessary for the British commander either to dislodge the enemy or to evacuate the place. General Howe, as we have seen, was not unprepared for the latter alternative; nevertheless he deemed it ignominious to give way at once before the advancing "rebels," and determined on an immediate attack, being, as he states, encouraged in this hazardous enterprise by the ardour of his troops. The vanguard, consisting of several regiments, was already embarked, and fell down to Castle William, from whence the descent was to be made. Thus a general action

\* Despatch of General Gage to the Earl of Dartmouth, July 24. 1775. See also Lord Barrington's Life by the Bishop of Durham (p. 140.), by which it appears that so early as November 12. 1774, the Secretary at War had suggested to the Cabinet whether the troops and their General "should not be directed to leave a place where at "present they can do no good and may do harm." — How just a foresight of Lexington and Bunker's Hill!

† Letter, March 3. 1776. American Archives, vol. v. p. 425.

seemed close at hand, to be fought on the anniversary of that event most unjustly and wrongfully termed the Massacre of Boston. That event was fresh in the minds of the enemy, and a cry of "Remember the fifth of March!" ran along the American lines. At this crisis the intended combatants were parted by a higher power than their own. A most violent storm arose, scattering the British boats, and rendering their attempt impracticable. By the time that it could be renewed the works on Dorchester Heights had so much advanced and had grown so strong that, as General Howe conceived, they could no longer be assailed with any prospect of success. Accordingly reverting to his first idea, he made hasty preparations to embark the troops and evacuate the town. Here again he had to strive against the shameful negligence which at that period pervaded the whole civil administration of the British military service. Thus writes one of his officers: "When the transports came to be examined they were void of both provisions and forage. If any are got on board to-day, it will be as much as can be done. Never were troops in so disgraceful a situation; and that not in the least our own fault, or owing to any want of skill or discretion in our commanders, but entirely owing to Great Britain being fast asleep. I pity General Howe from my soul!"\*

No compact or convention of any kind passed between the British and American commanders; but, through the mediation of the "Select Men" of Boston, there was in some degree a tacit understanding, that if during the embarkation the troops were not molested, the town should not be injured. During this interval, however, Castle William was wholly dismantled, and in great part demolished. On the morning of the 17th the last of the British troops embarked, and that same afternoon Boston was entered by General Israel Putnam and the American vanguard. Washington himself visited the town next day, and found himself enthusiastically welcomed. The British fleet however, with the troops on board, remained ten days longer in Nantasket Roads. As it proved they were only completing the preparations for their voyage,

\* See the American Archives, vol. v. p. 426.

but Washington might reasonably apprehend that they designed a parting blow. His apprehensions on this subject were increased by the moderate esteem in which he held the men of Massachusetts. Thus he writes: "I am taking every precaution I can to guard against the evil; but we have a kind of people to deal with who will not fear danger till the bayonet is at their breast; and then they are susceptible enough of it." \*

Having with much ado made the ships seaworthy, General Howe set sail, directing his course to Halifax, which he designed as the head quarters of his army until the reinforcements from England should arrive. From the grievous deficiencies of the transport service he had been compelled to leave behind a large amount of stores and ordnance, and to spike many excellent pieces of artillery. On the other hand he had taken with him, at their own urgent request, above a thousand of the inhabitants of Boston, who had espoused the cause of the parent state, and who dreaded on that account the vengeance of their countrymen. Before they had embarked they had, as Washington informs his brother, publicly declared that "if they thought the most abject submission would procure them peace they never would have stirred." † Indeed throughout this contest, and amidst all the qualities displayed by the Americans — many of those qualities being entitled to high respect and commendation — there was none certainly less amiable than their merciless rancour against those among them who adhered to the Royal side. In reference to those, a ferocious saying came to be current in America, that though we are commanded to forgive our enemies, we are nowhere commanded to forgive our friends.‡ In reference to them

\* To Joseph Reed, March 25. 1776. Washington's army at this time, by the Adjutant's return, amounted to 21,800 men, of which number however 2,700 were sick. (Life, by Sparks, p. 175.) Howe's troops by their Provision Returns were only 7,579 besides the men in hospital, amounting to between five and six hundred more. (American Archives, vol. v. p. 489.)

† Letter to John Augustine Washington, March 31. 1776, as printed in the American Archives.

‡ Grahame's History, vol. iv. p. 321. Mr. Grahame does not seem to be aware that this saying is quoted by Bacon in his Essay

true Jedburgh justice was more than once administered—first the punishment, then the accusation, and last of all the evidence! In reference to them, the most ordinary feelings of compassion were suspended. Even so generous and exalted a mind as Washington's does not always form an exception to this remark. Thus in the letter to his brother, from which I just now quoted, he speaks of the exiles from Boston in terms that he would never surely have applied to any other of the human race. "By all accounts there never existed a more miserable set of beings than these wretched creatures are. . . . They chose to commit themselves to the mercy of the waves, at a tempestuous season, rather than meet their offended countrymen. . . . One or two have done what a great many ought to have done long ago—committed suicide!"

To the Americans the recovery of Boston, after so many struggles and so protracted a blockade, became a natural topic of triumph. The Congress voted that in commemoration of this great event there should be struck a Medal in gold and bronze; and it was struck accordingly, not indeed (since they lacked an artist) in America, but by their direction, in France.\* It was ordered that in token of their gratitude the Medal should bear the effigy and the praise of Washington as Assertor of their Freedom; and this vote was accompanied by another of cordial thanks.—Washington remained a few days longer at Boston, busy in levelling the works upon the Neck and making other needful arrangements. By that time it was well understood that the next main object of British enterprise was to be New York, and to New York, therefore, Washing-

on Revenge, and ascribed to the invention of Cosmo Duke of Florence.

\* This fine medal is not in the collection of the British Museum, but I have seen it there in the Cabinet belonging to Mr. Hawkins, and I have another in my own possession. It has often been engraved. On the one side appears the head of Washington—*ADSSERTORI LIBERTATIS*;—on the other side a view of the American officers on Dorchester Heights with Boston in the distance and the inscription *BOSTONIUM RECUPERATUM*;—*HOSTIBUS PRIMO FUGATIS*; by these last words plainly renouncing all the idle vaunts of Lexington.



ton and the greater part of his army now repaired. He found time however for a rapid visit to Philadelphia, so as to concert his future measures with the leaders of the Congress.

In England meanwhile the expected reinforcements were being urged, though scarcely with the requisite vigour and celerity. The Cabinet had entertained some hopes of Russian auxiliaries, but the negotiation for that object could not be matured. Early in the year treaties were signed with the Landgrave of Hesse for taking into British pay twelve thousand of his men; with the Duke of Brunswick and other petty potentates of Germany for five thousand more. These little Princes, seeing the need of England, which did not choose to lean, as she might and should have done, on her own right arm, insisted on obtaining, and did obtain, most usurious terms. Under the name of levy-money there was to be paid to them the price of thirty crowns for every foot-soldier. Under the name of subsidy each of their Serene Highnesses was moreover to be indulged with a yearly sum, irrespective of the pay and subsistence of the troops; and on the plea that in this case no certain number of years was stipulated as the term of service, the Landgrave of Hesse claimed and was promised a double subsidy, namely 450,000 crowns a year! The men were to enter into pay before they began to march! The subsidies were to be continued for one full year at least, after the war was over and the troops had returned to their respective homes! Never yet in short was the blood of brave men sold on harder terms.

The disgrace of this transaction to the German Princes who engaged in it requires little comment. If the rude Swiss mountaineers of the middle ages have been justly reproached for their mercenary practice, how much more justly will that reproach apply to educated men of the eighteenth century! Even now the traveller, as he lingers over the delicious garden-slopes of Wilhelms-Höhe, may sigh to think at what sacrifice they were adorned—how many burghers' sons from the adjoining town of Cassel were sent forth, for no object beyond replenishing the coffers of their Sovereign, to fight and to fall in a quarrel not their own. The ablest by far of the German Princes



at that time, Frederick of Prussia, was not in general a man of compassionate feelings. He had no especial love or care for the North American cause; indeed it is scarcely mentioned in his most familiar letters, unless for a sorry jest on the name of General Howe.\* Yet even Frederick expressed in strong terms his contempt for the scandalous man-traffic of his neighbours. It is said that whenever any of the newly hired Brunswickers or Hessians had to pass through any portion of his territory he claimed to levy on them the usual toll as for so many head of cattle, since he said they had been sold as such!†

Nor can the British Ministry in this transaction be considered free from blame. If men were needed was there any lack of them in England? Was it wise to inform foreign states that we deemed ourselves thus dependent on foreign aid? Was it wise to hold forth to America the first example of obtaining assistance from abroad? Above all, if conciliation was to be the object full as much as conquest, how signal the imprudence thus, in the midst of a civil strife, to thrust forward aliens to both parties, in blood, in language, and in manners! What else could be expected than that these aliens should feel themselves restrained by no ties of affinity, by no feelings of affection, from wreaking on their opponents the utmost miseries of war? Considerations such as these were warmly urged in both Houses of Parliament, but only by small minorities. In America, on the contrary, such considerations appear to have pervaded the great body of the people. Certain it is that among the various causes which at this period wrought upon our trans-Atlantic brethren to renounce their connection with us, there was none more cogent in their minds than the news that German mercenaries had been hired and were coming to fight against them.

The reinforcements from England were impatiently expected by General Howe, who felt all the danger of delay at such a juncture; but during many weeks they were

\* "Nous entendons parler du General Howe dont chaque chien en aboyant prononce le nom." (A Voltaire, le 17 Juin 1777.)

† *Den üblichen vieh-zoll.* See Preuss, Lebens-Geschichte, vol. iii. p. 472.

expected in vain. Besides the main object of New York, Howe had in contemplation two smaller enterprises, one to the south for the reduction of the Carolinas, another to the north for the relief of Quebec. To the command of the first was appointed General Clinton, to the command of the second, at a later period, General Burgoyne.

With respect to North Carolina, Mr. Martin, the late Governor of that province, had endeavoured to raise a counter-revolution, through the means of the Highland emigrants and of certain unruly men known by the name of REGULATORS\* ; but his levies were quickly routed and dispersed. In South Carolina it was hoped that the Royal cause might be better supported. General Clinton arriving off Cape Fear there met a squadron of ships from England under Sir Peter Parker, having on board a detachment of troops under Earl Cornwallis. Early in June this combined force came to anchor off Charleston Bar. The first object was to reduce Sullivan's Island, which guarded the entrance of the river, and on which the Americans had constructed a new fort. A brave officer, Colonel Moultrie, commanded at this post, while General Charles Lee was near at hand with a large body of Militia, having been despatched by Congress to this district on the first rumours of its danger. Clinton disembarked his men upon a sand-bank called Long Island, from which he expected to pass over into Sullivan's by a ford. But he had been grossly deceived by erroneous soundings, and found to his great mortification the channel, which was reported to be only eighteen inches, upwards of seven feet in depth. Thus the King's forces were arrested by an impervious gulf at the very time of action, and at the very place where they had expected to pass almost dry-shod. The fort on Sullivan's Island (since from its defender called Moultrie's) was meanwhile cannonaded by the ships, but their fire was far more effectually returned, and finally, notwithstanding most signal gallantry in the conduct of Parker and his captains,

\* "The Regulators had acquired this name from their attempting  
"to regulate the administration of justice in the remote settlements  
"in a summary manner subversive of the public peace." (Ramsay's  
History of the Revolution, vol. i. p. 253.)

one of them named Morris conspicuous above all, the attack, and indeed the whole expedition, had to be relinquished, with much damage to several of the vessels, and two hundred men killed or wounded.

In Canada, better success attended the British arms. Towards the close of winter Arnold, still before Quebec, had been superseded by the arrival of General Wooster, and had retired in disgust to Montreal. His absence was in itself a grievous loss to the Americans. Great irregularities moreover became rife among them. The Adjutant General of their own army complains, not merely of "provincial jealousies" and "quarrelling Generals," but still more of "a most incredible waste or embezzlement of "all stores and provisions."\* — On the other side reinforcements had been promised to Carleton, as soon as the season might allow; and even before the navigation of the St. Lawrence was fully cleared, three ships, forcing their way through the ice, joined him at Quebec. Hereupon — it was the 6th of May — Carleton sallied forth against the enemy at his gates; they were already retreating, but he put them to the rout with the loss of all their baggage and artillery. The campaign thus auspiciously begun was no less auspiciously pursued. One division of the Americans was captured at the Cedars; another was defeated at the Three Rivers; the rest were driven in confusion beyond Lake Champlain; and thus before midsummer the entire province had been recovered for the King.

In several of these actions, and above all at the Cedars, the British allowed themselves to be joined by some parties of the Indians — a most cruel and, as it deserved to be, a most precarious resource in such a war. To whichever side the savages attached themselves — for both at various times invited their co-operation, — they brought with them far more discredit than support. Trained in habits of bloodshed, and little awed by the authority of American or European officers, these Red Men might be useful as foragers or as spies and scouts, but were chiefly known by the terrors which they spread among the undefended, and the barbarities which they sought to wreak upon the prisoners and the wounded. —

\* Life of President Reed, vol. i. p. 210.

Unhappily upon this subject it was found much easier to blame than to forbear. An American of the present day observes: "Writers of all parties have united in condemning a practice, so unjustifiable in itself and so hostile to the principles of civilization, while at the same time belligerents of all parties have continued to follow it, even down to the late war between England and the United States."\*

While the campaign had thus recommenced in Canada, the troops of General Howe, eager as they were for action, still remained cooped up in their dismal Nova Scotia quarters. Thus writes one of the officers: "The Dragoons are under orders for Halifax — a cursed, cold wintry place even yet; nothing to eat, less to drink. Bad times, my dear friend!"† In such a situation the delays in the arrival of the armament from Europe, great as they really were, seemed greater still. General Howe, at length losing patience, resolved, with the forces already under his command, to sail towards New York. Setting out on the 10th of June, he arrived off Sandy Hook in the latter part of the same month. He proceeded to land his men on Staten Island, where Washington had placed only a small military force, with a view to the supplies, and where the English accordingly encountered no resistance. So far from it, that they were received with great demonstrations of joy by the inhabitants, who took the Oaths of Allegiance, and enrolled themselves in bodies of Militia under the authority of Mr. Tryon, lately Governor of the province. No less favourable representations as to the state of popular feeling reached the camp from Long Island, and the neighbouring parts of New Jersey. By the 12th of July, the General found himself joined by his brother the Admiral; and some time later there arrived the greater part of the transports due from

\* Note of Mr. Sparks to Washington's Writings, vol. iii. p. 495. It appears from the Secret Journals of Congress, as Mr. Sparks proceeds to state, that on May 25. 1776, they resolved, "That it is highly expedient to engage the Indians in the service of the United Colonies." They also authorized Washington to employ the Indians of Penobscot and St. John's who had proffered their services.

† Letter in American Archives, vol. v. p. 426.

England. Lord Howe had first touched at Halifax, and from thence been directed to Sandy Hook. There were on board his fleet, besides British troops, many of the expected mercenaries from Hesse and Brunswick, but their last division had not yet left England; and, indeed, it is to be observed of them, that dear-bought as they had been, they never at any time reached the full numbers required by the treaties.\* It was reckoned that the whole united force, comprising the troops returned from Charleston, and the lingering detachments due from England, would amount to 30,000, although, as it proved, it fell short of 25,000 men.

Besides the troops, Lord Howe had brought with him a document, which it was hoped might render them unnecessary — the Royal Warrant appointing himself and General Howe Commissioners under the late Act of Parliament for the Pacification of America. No doubt that the selection of such men was most wisely made. The memory of their elder brother, who had fallen gloriously in the wars against the French in Canada, was endeared to the colonists who had fought by his side. Both Lord Howe and the General, but Lord Howe especially, had ever since cultivated a most friendly intercourse with the Americans, and now entertained a most earnest wish to conclude the strife against them. But judicious as was the choice of the Commissioners, the restricted terms of the Commission were certainly in the highest degree impolitic. Lord Howe had laboured, but vainly, to obtain its enlargement; it amounted, in fact, to little more than the power, first, of receiving submissions, and then, but not till then, of granting pardons and inquiring into grievances.† Yet still, since these terms had not been divulged and were much magnified by common rumour, the name of the Commission was not ill adapted for

\* The men serving in America, and “subsidised” in addition to the national troops, are computed by Chief Justice Marshall at “about thirteen thousand.” (*Life of Washington*, vol. ii. p. 382.)

† MS. Instructions, May 6. 1776, State Paper Office. It is therein required as a preliminary condition, before any province shall be declared in the King’s peace, that its Convention, or Committee, or Association, “which have usurped powers,” shall be dissolved.

popular effect. Had Lord Howe arrived with it a few months, or even only a few weeks before, as he might and should have done, we are assured by American writers that an impression might have been produced by it, in some at least of the Thirteen Colonies, to an extent which they "cannot calculate" or rather, perhaps, which they do not like to own.\* But these few months had been decisive in another direction. During these months both the feeling and the position of the insurgents had most materially changed.

At the beginning of the troubles, as I have already shown, and for a long time afterwards, the vast majority of the Americans had no wish nor thought of separation from the mother country. Their object was substantially, and with only some new safe-guards for their rights, to revert to the same state in which they had been before the administration of George Grenville. But the further the conflict proceeded, the less and less easy of attainment did that object seem. How hard, after what had passed, to restore harmonious action between the two Powers now at strife; for the people to trust the Governors appointed by the King; for the King to trust the Assemblies elected by the people! Even where the actual wrong might have departed, it would still leave its fatal legacy, rancour and suspicion, behind. Under the influence of these feelings, a great number of persons in all these Colonies were gradually turning their minds to the idea of a final separation from the parent State. Still in all these Colonies, excepting only in New England, there were many lingering regrets, many deep-rooted doubts and misgivings. John Adams writes as follows:—"My "dear friend Gates, all our misfortunes arise from a "single source—the reluctance of the Southern Colonies "to Republican government."† Here are the words at the same period of another popular leader: "Notwithstanding the Act of Parliament for seizing our property, "there is a strange reluctance in the minds of many to cut "the knot which ties us to Great Britain."‡ Besides

\* See, for example, the Life of President Reed, vol. i. p. 196.

† This was in March, 1776. (American Archives, vol. v. p. 472.)

‡ Letter of Reed to Washington, March, 3. 1776.



such total difference of views, there were also, as in most popular changes, some wild misapprehensions current. One gentleman, a correspondent of Washington, states that he heard this question asked and answered as follows: — “What do you mean by Independence? — We mean a form of government to make us independent of “the rich, and every man able to do as he pleases!”\*

To inform and to animate the people on this subject, several writers of pamphlets now appeared. The chief among them was Thomas Paine, afterwards so notorious for his conduct in Revolutionary France, and for his authorship of the “Age of Reason.” Paine, I regret to own it, was a native of England; at his outset a Quaker, and a stay-maker of Thetford, in Norfolk. Ere long he became estranged both from his profession and his principles. He had espoused the views of a scoffer in religion, and of a leveller in politics. He had tried various trades and walks of life — as sailor, excise-man, school-master, and poet — but at last he settled down to that of democratic agitator, rightly conceiving that to bawl and to scribble must be at all times easier than to work. Having attracted the notice of Franklin, and obtained from him a letter of recommendation to his friends, Paine crossed the Atlantic in 1774, and went to live at Philadelphia. Here the newspapers, or periodical essays, first gave scope to his declamatory powers. His pamphlet, in the spring of 1776, which was entitled “Common Sense,” and which expressed in clear bold language the most cogent arguments that could be devised in behalf of Independence, produced a strong effect in all the Colonies, and drew forth warm praise from all the popular leaders.

But it was not solely upon pamphlets that these popular leaders relied. On some occasions use was also made, not only of harangues to the soldiers, but likewise of sermons to the people. In both, so far as we can gather, historical parallels were among the favourite figures of speech. Thus, for instance, at Philadelphia we find a preacher comparing the people of Israel with the people of America, and King Pharaoh with King George.†

\* See the American Archives, vol. vi. p. 390. Of another silly speech in his hearing, the same writer says: “I shamed the fool so much that he slunk away, but he got his election by it.”

† American Archives, vol. vi. p. 488.

Thus, in Massachusetts, a few months before, a British officer going out from Boston in the disguise of a countryman, saw a company of Militia exercised, and listened to the speech of their commander,—“very eloquent, “quoting Cæsar and Pompey, Brigadiers Putnam and “Ward.”\*

The gradual progress of the idea of Independence in the minds of the people may be clearly traced through the first six months of 1776. Several of the Colonies sent instructions to their delegates in Congress, desiring or directing them to vote for a separation. Among the Virginians the appetite for such a measure was so keen, that they in fact resolved it for their own Colony some time before any general system of that kind had received the sanction of Congress. A Committee prepared, and on the 27th of May reported to the Convention at Williamsburg a “Declaration of Rights,” which at a later period served the Revolutionists of France for the model of their more celebrated “Rights of Man.” In that Declaration it is affirmed that the Rights which are claimed cannot exist with hereditary monarchy. For the fourth Article states, that “the idea of a man being born “a magistrate, a legislator, or a judge, is unnatural and “absurd.” In other places there were symptoms less decided, perhaps, but scarcely less significant of the popular tendency. Thus, in the Maryland Convention, we find this Resolution adopted on the 25th of May, “That every “Prayer and Petition for the King’s Majesty be henceforth omitted in all Churches or Chapels of the province.” The Congress itself, or at least its leading members, had become by this time ripe for such a change. So far back as the November preceding, they had appointed a Secret Committee for corresponding “with the friends of America “in Great Britain, Ireland, and other parts of the world.”† By that Committee a few months afterwards, Silas Deane, of Connecticut, was despatched on a private mission to Paris. His instructions, which bear the date of the 3d

\* American Archives, vol. i. p. 1265.

† On the first unauthorized notions of aid from France, in the autumn of 1775, see a curious passage in the Life of John Jay, by his son William Jay, vol. i. p. 39.

of March, direct him to inform the Count de Vergennes, the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, "that if we should, as there is a great appearance we shall, come to a total separation from Great Britain, France would be looked upon as the Power, whose friendship it would be fittest for us to obtain and cultivate."

Besides the other causes of alienation from England at this juncture, there was one less obvious, but probably not less real. It had been a saying of the Marquis de Montcalm, that our conquests along the St. Lawrence would hereafter lead to the severance of our own American Colonies from the parent State, and that France would thus obtain a compensation for her loss.\* While Canada was still in the hands of a powerful enemy, New England was compelled to lean on Old England for support. The removal of the external pressure tended to loosen this connecting tie. Such change of feeling may have wrought unconsciously with many, nay, with most, of those whom it affected, but as it had not escaped the foresight of a statesman, so did it not fail to leaven and imbue the great body of the people.

Under the influence of the various motives and causes which I have endeavoured to explain, but above all, no doubt from the feeling of petitions slighted, and wrongs unredressed, the Congress now took up the question of Independence in good earnest. Early in June, a distinct proposal to that effect was moved by Mr. Richard Henry Lee, and seconded by Mr. John Adams; the latter the most conspicuous among its defenders in debate. On the other side the principal speaker was Mr. Dickinson. He observed that since the Member for Massachusetts had thought fit to commence by invoking a Heathen God, the God of Eloquence, he, for his own part, should more solemnly implore the true God, the ruler of the Universe, that if the proposed measure was for the benefit of

\* On the prediction of the Marquis de Montcalm, and on this whole branch of the subject, I would refer the reader to that most able Speech on Colonial Government delivered by Lord John Russell in the House of Commons, February 8. 1850.—It is only through this speech that the words of Montcalm are known to me; I have since heard from America that their authenticity is often called in question. (1853.)

America nothing which he should say against it might make the least impression. He then urged that a Declaration of Independence, at such a juncture, might divide the people of America, and firmly unite against them the people of England. Yet even Mr. Dickinson went no further than to counsel that some assurance should be obtained of aid from a foreign Power before they renounced their connection with Great Britain, and that the Declaration of Independence should be the condition to be offered for such aid.\* So far, under a sense of ill-usage, had the old spirit of loyalty declined!

Without expressly adopting the Resolution thus before them, the Congress appointed a Committee to prepare a Declaration in the form desired. This Committee was to consist of five members, including John Adams, Jefferson, and Franklin. Jefferson, though the youngest of all, was deputed to hold the pen. In his own Memoirs may be seen the draft, as he had first framed it, with some slight amendments by Franklin and Adams, and as it was then reported to the House. Several alterations of importance were subsequently made by the Congress at large. They deemed it wiser to omit the passages which conveyed a censure on the British people, and to aim their complaints and charges as directly as possible against the King. Thus, as they imagined, they should in great measure keep clear of offence to their friends in England. On other grounds of policy they also determined to strike out a clause inserted by Jefferson, reprobating in strong terms the African slave-trade. That clause it was found would displease the Southern Colonies, which had never sought to prohibit the importation of slaves, but, on the contrary, desired to continue it. "Our Northern brethren," adds Jefferson, "also, I believe, felt a little tender under these censures, for though their people had very few slaves themselves, yet they had been considerable carriers of them to others."†

It is remarkable that Jefferson, in his first draft, had not scrupled to avail himself of the low and most un-

\* A sketch of Mr. Dickinson's speech will be found in Dr. Ramsay's History (vol. i. p. 339.).

† Memoirs and Correspondence, vol. i. p. 16. ed. 1829.

worthy prejudice which then prevailed against the nation north of Tweed. We find him therein complain of the King and people at home because they have permitted themselves "to send over not only soldiers of our common blood, but Scotch and foreign mercenaries." But this passage also was struck out by his colleagues.

Such numerous mutilations of the Draft were by no means welcome to those who had framed it. Franklin, who was sitting next to Jefferson, turned round to him, and said, "I have made it a rule, whenever in my power, to avoid becoming the draftsman of papers to be reviewed by a public body. I took my lesson from an incident which I will relate to you. When I was a journeyman printer, one of my companions, an apprentice hatter, having served out his time, was about to open shop for himself. His first concern was to have a handsome sign-board, with a proper inscription. He composed it in these words:—JOHN THOMPSON, HATTER, MAKES AND SELLS HATS FOR READY MONEY; with a figure of a hat subjoined. But he thought he would submit it to his friends for their amendments. The first he showed it to thought the word HATTER tautologous, because followed by the words MAKES HATS, which showed he was a hatter. It was struck out. The next observed, that the word MAKES might as well be omitted, because his customers would not care who made the hats; if good to their mind, they would buy, by whomsoever made. He struck it out. A third said he thought the words, FOR READY MONEY, were useless, as it was not the custom of the place to sell on credit. Every one who purchased expected to pay. They were parted with; and the inscription now stood: 'John Thompson sells Hats.' SELLS hats, says his next friend, why nobody will expect you to give them away. What, then, is the use of that word? It was stricken out, and HATS followed, the rather as there was one painted on the board. So his inscription was reduced ultimately to JOHN THOMPSON, with the figure of a hat subjoined."\*

It is the part of an historian (so at least it seems to me,

\* Life of Franklin, by Sparks, p. 407.

and on that principle are the foregoing chapters framed) to neglect no tale or incident, however trifling it may appear, that can best illustrate the feelings which produced, or the circumstances which attended, any great crisis in human affairs. But the changes in the Draft of the Declaration, though galling to the pride of its authors, were in truth mere matters of detail. On its general principle—on the main point, that is to say, of Independence—a division was taken at the beginning of July. Nine Colonies declared in its favour. Four others—namely, South Carolina and Pennsylvania, New York and Delaware—either voted against it or would not vote at all. But within a few days, or even hours, means were found to elude or to overcome that obstacle. The delegates of South Carolina were induced to declare that, although they continued to think the measure hurtful, they would vote for it for the sake of unanimity. In the Pennsylvanian delegation a minority assumed unto themselves the part of a majority, and undertook to give their signatures as such. By such means a seeming concord—an unanimity on paper—was attained.\* The Declaration of Independence, appearing as the act of the whole people, was finally adopted and signed by every member present at the time, except only Mr. Dickinson. This was on the 4th of July—a day which has ever since been celebrated as a festival by the Americans—as the birthday, for thus they deemed it, of their freedom. And among all the coincidences of date which History records, there is none perhaps so striking as that John Adams and Jefferson, the two main movers of this Declaration, should both—after filling with signal reputation the highest office in their native land—expire on the fiftieth

\* These transactions, which for a long time remained secret, are explained by Mr. Jefferson, partly in his *Memoirs*, and partly in his appended Letter to Mr. Wells, dated May 12. 1819. He states that as to Pennsylvania, "The Convention, learning that the Declaration had been signed by a minority only of their delegates, named a new delegation on the 20th (of July)." None of the New York delegates were present on the 4th, and the signatures from that State were delayed for several days in order to obtain fresh powers from their provincial Convention. One Member (Mr. Thornton, of New Hampshire) was permitted to add his signature so late as the 4th of November.



anniversary of the day on which this their own handiwork, this the foundation of their own greatness, was first sent forth.

This memorable Declaration, on which the fate of so many millions of people, present and future, has depended for weal or for woe, commences by briefly stating, that men are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, — that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, — and that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it. The document then proceeds at great length, and with much bitterness of language, to enumerate what it terms the “repeated injuries and usurpations” proceeding from “the present King of Great Britain.” As already explained, the Congress had purposely, so far as possible, avoided any acrimonious allusions, either to the Parliament or to the people of that country. “We hold them,” says the Declaration, “as we hold the rest of mankind, — enemies in war, in peace friends.” The last paragraph, or summing up of this document, sets forth with these words: — “We, therefore, the representatives of the United States of America, in General Congress assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the name and by the authority of the good people of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare, that these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, FREE AND INDEPENDENT STATES.” From that day, — exclaim the native chroniclers of these States, with a not unbecoming pride, — from that day the word COLONIES is not known in their history!\*

At this period, the culminating point in the whole American War, I may be forgiven for desiring to interrupt its narrative in order to review its course and its results. — That injuries and oppressive acts of power had been inflicted by England upon America, I have in many places shown, and do most fully acknowledge. That from the other side, and above all from Massachusetts, there had been strong provocation, I must continue to maintain. I should not deem it consistent with candour to deny that

\* Sparks's *Life of Washington*, p. 182.

the Americans had sufficient grounds for resisting, as they did resist, the Ministerial and Parliamentary measures. But whether these had yet attained a pitch to justify them in discarding and renouncing their allegiance to the Throne, is a far more doubtful question — a question on which, perhaps, neither an Englishman nor yet an American could quite impartially decide.

The time has come, however, as I believe and trust, when it is possible to do equal justice to the many good and upright men who in this great struggle embraced the opposite sides. The great mass of the people meant honestly on both shores of the Atlantic. The two chief men in both countries were alike pure-minded. On the one side there were deeds that savoured of tyranny, on the other side there were deeds that savoured of rebellion; yet at heart George the Third was never a tyrant, nor Washington ever a rebel. Of Washington I most firmly believe, that no single act appears in his whole public life proceeding from any other than public, and those the highest, motives. But my persuasion is no less firm that there would be little flattery in applying the same terms of respect and commendation to "the good old King." I do not, indeed, deny that some degree of prejudice and pride may, though unconsciously, have mingled with his motives. I do not deny, that at the outset of these troubles he lent too ready an ear to the glozing reports of his Governors and Deputies—the Hutchinsons or Olivers, —assuring him that the discontents were confined to a factious few, and that measures of rigour and repression alone were needed. For such measures of rigour he may deserve, and has incurred, his share of censure. But after the insurgent Colonies had proclaimed their Independence, is it just to blame King George, as he often has been blamed, for his steadfast and resolute resistance to that claim? Was it for him, unless after straining every nerve against it, to forfeit a portion of his birthright and a jewel of his Crown? Was it for him, without the clearest case of necessity, to allow the rending asunder of his empire, the array for all time to come of several millions of his people against the rest? After calling on his loyal subjects in the Colonies to rise, after requiring and employing their aid, was it for him on any light grounds to relin-

quish his cause and theirs, and yield them over unforgiven to the vengeance of their countrymen? Was it for him to overlook the consequences, not even yet, perhaps, in their full extent unfolded, of such a precedent of victory to popular and Colonial insurrection? May not the King, on the contrary, have deemed, that on such a question, touching, as it did, both his honour and his rights, he was bound to be firm, — firmer than even the firmest of his Ministers? Not, of course, that he could be justified for persevering, — but, in truth, he did not so persevere, — after every reasonable hope had failed. Not, of course, that he could be excused for continuing to demand, or to expect, unconditional submission; but, as his own letters to Lord North assure us, such an idea was never harboured in his mind. To do his duty conscientiously, as he should answer it to God hereafter, and, according to the lights he had received — such was his unceasing aim and endeavour from the day, when young, but superior to the frailties of youth, he first assumed the reins of government, until that dismal period, half a century later, when bowed down by years and sorrows, and blind, — doubly blind, according to the fine thought of Calderon \*, — he concluded his reign, though not as yet his life.

Before the American War had commenced, and during its first period, nearly all the statesmen and writers of England argued—or rather took for granted, as too plain to stand in need of argument—that separation from our Colonies would most grievously weaken and impair, if not wholly ruin, the parent State. Dr. Tucker, Dean of Gloucester, and a prolific pamphleteer, stood almost alone in presuming to doubt that such consequences must ensue, and advising only that the separation should be prompt and amicable. It is worthy of note how much our experience has run counter to the general prognostication,—how little the loss was felt, or how quickly the

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“ Entrar solo un hombre veo  
Que sin luz y sin razon  
Andaba dos veces ciego.”

*Mañanas de Abril y Mayo, Jornada i.*

Deprived of eye sight and estranged in mind,  
How hardly dealt by fortune ! doubly blind !

void was supplied. An historian of high and just authority—Mr. Macaulay—has observed that England was never so rich, so great, so formidable to foreign princes, so absolutely mistress of the sea, as since the alienation of her American Colonies.\* The true effect of that alienation upon ourselves, as time has shown, has been not positive, but by comparison; it has lain not in the withdrawal of wealth and population and resources, but in the raising up a rival State from the same race, and with powers and energies not inferior to our own.

But how far, and in what degree, has the new form of government promoted the happiness of the United States themselves? In considering that question, we should, in the first place, discard the prejudice or vague notion prevailing in some minds, as if there were something unnatural in the continued connexion between the parent State and its Colony; as if the independence of the latter must be, at all times and under all circumstances, conducive to its good. To be assured of the contrary we need only cast our eyes from the Northern Continent of the New World to its Southern. There the sway of the Spaniards teemed with neglects and abuses. There the laws were faulty, and the execution of them more faulty still; there the Viceroys, though sometimes upright and able, were much oftener mere indolent grandees. These Colonies have now, amidst loud vaunts of their coming greatness, renounced what they termed the yoke that weighed upon them. Yet up to this time it must be owned that they have not changed for the better. In the place of King Log they have only gained Citizen Stork. They have forfeited tranquillity, without, in truth, securing freedom. Thus, as a recent traveller informs us, it has happened to the Republic of Buenos Ayres, in the course of only nine months, to undergo no less than fifteen changes in its government—each of the fifteen new Presidents being, according to the forms of the Constitution, elected for three years! Thus, also, in the remoter districts of South America, the same traveller was wont to hear the poor people recount their present grievances and sufferings, and usually end their com-

\* Essays, vol. ii. p. 42.

plaints by saying, "It was not so when we had a "King!"\*

It would be most unjust to compare, even for a moment, such a condition of society (if society it can be called) with that in North America. It would be folly, or worse than folly, to deny that since their Independence the prosperity of the United States has advanced with gigantic strides—that they have grown to be a first-rate power—that immense works of public utility have been achieved with marvellous speed—that the clearing of new lands and the building of new cities have been such as to outstrip the most sanguine calculations—that among them the working classes have been in no common degree well paid and prosperous—that a feeling for the national honour is in no country stronger—that the first elements of education have been most widely diffused—that many good and brave men have been trained and are training to the service of the commonwealth. But have their independent institutions made them, on the whole, a happy and contented people? That, among themselves, is often proclaimed as undeniable; and certainly, among themselves, it may not always be safely denied. That, however, is not always the impression conveyed to him who only sojourns in their land, by the careworn faces, by the hurried steps, by the unsocial meals which he sees, or by the incessant party cries which he hears around him—by the fretful aspirations and the feverish hopes resulting from the unbounded space of competition open to them without check or barrier; and by the innumerable disappointments and heartburnings which, in consequence, arise. On the true condition of North America, let us mark the correspondence between two of the greatest and most highly gifted of her sons. There is now open before me a letter which, in August, 1837, and on the annexation of Texas, Dr. Channing wrote to Mr. Clay. In that letter, as published at Boston, I find the following words:—

"I cannot do justice to this topic without speaking  
"freely of our country, as freely as I should of any other;  
'and unhappily we are so accustomed, as a people, to

\* See the Journal of Researches by Mr. Charles Darwin, vol. i. pp. 141. 295.

“ receive incense, to be soothed by flattery, and to account  
“ reputation as a more important interest than morality,  
“ that my freedom may be construed into a kind of dis-  
“ loyalty. But it would be wrong to make concessions to  
“ this dangerous weakness. . . . Among us, a spirit of  
“ lawlessness pervades the community which, if not re-  
“ pressed, threatens the dissolution of our present forms of  
“ society. Even in the old States mobs are taking the  
“ government into their hands; and a profligate news-  
“ paper finds little difficulty in stirring up multitudes to  
“ violence. When we look at the parts of the country  
“ nearest Texas we see the arms of the law paralysed by  
“ the passions of the individual. . . . Add to all this the  
“ invasions of the rights of speech and of the press by  
“ lawless force, the extent and toleration of which oblige  
“ us to believe that a considerable portion of our citizens  
“ have no comprehension of the first principles of liberty.  
“ It is an undeniable fact that in consequence of these  
“ and other symptoms, the confidence of many reflecting  
“ men in our free institutions is very much impaired.  
“ Some despair. That main pillar of public liberty,  
“ mutual trust among citizens, is shaken. That we must  
“ seek security for property and life in a stronger govern-  
“ ment, is a spreading conviction. Men who, in public,  
“ talk of the stability of our institutions, whisper their  
“ doubts—perhaps their scorn—in private.”

Whether the people of the United States might have been as thriving and more happy had they remained British subjects, I will not presume to say. Certainly not, if violent men like Lord Hillsborough, or corrupt men like Mr. Rigby, had continued to take part in their administration. With other hands at the helm, the case might have been otherwise. Jefferson at least, in his first Draft of the Declaration of Independence, said of his countrymen and of the English, “We might have  
“ been a free and a great people together.” One thing, at all events, is plain—that, had these Colonies shared the fate of the other dominions of the British Crown, the main curse and shame of their existing system—the plague-spot of slavery—would have been long since removed from them; but, as in the case of Jamaica, not without a large compensation in money to the slave-



owners. It is also plain that, in the case supposed, they would have equally shared in our pride and glory at the wondrous growth of the Anglo-Saxon race—that race undivided and entire—extending its branches as now to the furthest regions of the earth, yet all retaining their connexion with the parent stem—all its members bound by the same laws—all animated by the same loyalty—all tending to the same public-spirited aim. How great a nation should we and they have been together—how great in the arts both of peace and of war—scarcely unequal now to all other nations of the world combined!

Some strong reasons there certainly are to show that, with respect to a newly settled nation a Colonial connexion may add greatly to its happiness. That connexion supplies the checks and barriers that are wanting. Such checks and barriers are always to be found in old and well-governed countries, whatever their form of government may be. In the Dutch Commonwealth, for instance, they were quite as strong as in the English Monarchy. And some such restraints appear essential to happiness either in public or in private life. In the latter, experience shows us that those persons who desire to be wholly disentangled and to live without obligation to others—who discard all ties of family, of profession, of business, and of duty—find themselves at last the most unhappy of mankind. “You have learnt as we all “have,” writes a celebrated lady of this class—Madame Du Deffand, “that even the most drudging task is pleasanter than the freedom of the *FAR-NIENTE*.”\* Not far dissimilar is the case of nations. In long-established governments, the influence of laws, or not less powerful of customs and of habits,—as in Colonies, the orders from home,—tend alike to limit ambition and avert disappointment. In countries, on the contrary, where the tide of revolution has swept all landmarks away—where any man may become any thing—where a thousand men in consequence are striving for an object which only one can attain—the result is, in theory, perfect freedom, but in practice, vanity and vexation of spirit. Something

\* To Horace Walpole, April 12. 1778. (Letters, vol. iii. p. 353.)

independent of ourselves—something fixed and firm—something which we know that our will cannot subvert, and beyond which, therefore, our hopes do not aspire—seems requisite in all human society to its present peace and well being, and still more to its future security and permanence.

Until 1776, views like these, so far as the United States are concerned in them, might have been warnings for the future. Since 1782, at the latest, they are merely day-dreams of the past. In place of them, let us now indulge the hope and expectation that the American people may concur with ours in desiring that no further resentment may be nourished, no further strife be stirred, between the kindred nations; so that both, mindful of their common origin, and conscious of their growing greatness, may both alike discard, as unworthy of them, all mean and petty jealousies, and be ever henceforth what Nature has designed them—friends.

## CHAPTER LIV.

As sent forth by the Congress, the Declaration of Independence having reached the camp of Washington, was, by his orders, read aloud at the head of every regiment. There, as in most other places, it excited much less notice than might have been supposed. An American author of our own day, most careful in his statements, and most zealous in the cause of independence, observes that, "No one can read the private correspondence of the times without being struck with the slight impression made on either the army or the mass of the people by the Declaration."\* The Adjutant-General, in his familiar and almost daily letters to his wife, does not even allude to it. But though there was little of enthusiasm, there were some excesses. At New York, a party of the soldiers, with tumultuary violence, tore down and beheaded a statue of the King which stood upon the Broadway, having been erected only six years before. Washington, greatly to his honour, did not shrink from the duty of rebuking them next day, in his General Orders, for their misdirected zeal.

It was at this inauspicious juncture — only a few hours after Independence had been proclaimed in the ranks of his opponents — that the bearer of the pacific commission, Lord Howe, arrived off Sandy Hook. He had cause to regret most bitterly both the delay in his passage and the limitation in his powers. He did not neglect, however, whatever means of peace were still within his reach. He sent on shore a declaration announcing to the people the object of his mission. He despatched a friendly letter,

\* Life and Correspondence of President Reed, vol. i. p. 195. Washington, however, in his public letter to Congress, (as included in Mr. Jared Sparks's collection) says, that the troops had testified "their warmest approbation." Writings, vol. iii. p. 457.

written at sea, to Dr. Franklin, at Philadelphia. But when Franklin's answer came, it showed him wholly adverse to a reconciliation, expressing, in strong terms, his resentment of the "atrocious injuries" which, as he said, America had suffered from "your uninformed and "proud nation." Lord Howe's next step was to send a flag of truce, with another letter, to Washington. But here a preliminary point of form arose. Lord Howe, as holding the King's commission, could not readily acknowledge any rank or title not derived from His Majesty. He had, therefore, directed his letter to "George Washington, Esq." On the other hand, Washington, feeling that, in his circumstances, to yield a punctilio would be to sacrifice a principle, declined to receive or open any letter not addressed to him as General. Thus, at the very outset, this negotiation was cut short.

In the lofty tone which he here adopted, Washington was not swayed by any overweening notion of his strength. His troops had dwindled to 17,000 men, of whom above 3000 were sick, and as many detached on posts; so that around him at New York there were only 10,000 fit for duty. In one of his letters to the Congress we find him state the heavy disadvantages under which he should labour in case of an immediate attack from the English army. But in that case, he adds, "so far as I can judge, "from the professions and apparent dispositions of my "troops, I shall have their support. . . . And though "the appeal may not terminate so happily as I could wish, "yet the enemy will not succeed in their views without "considerable loss. Any advantage they may gain I "trust will cost them dear."\* In that passage surely we see displayed a hero's mind; calmly foreseeing defeat as certain, yet as calmly resolved to abide it in the path of duty, and to contest it as long as possible.

This letter bears date the 8th of August. Not many days afterwards the American army was reinforced by two regiments from Pennsylvania, and by large bodies of New England and New York Militia, which increased it to 27,000 men. Of these, however, nearly one fourth

\* This passage is cited in Marshall's *Life* (vol. ii. p. 393.), though omitted in Sparks's collection.

were sick. To guard one of the main approaches to New York, a part of this army was stationed in the furthest western angle of Long Island, with directions to throw up entrenchments in front of the little town of Brooklyn. The command of this important post was entrusted by Washington to General Greene, an officer of bravery and enterprise, but whose talents were as yet known only to his friends.\* Washington himself found it necessary to continue his head quarters at New York, since there seemed great probability that the English, whether or not conjointly with an attack on Brooklyn, might avail themselves of their naval force, and make a direct attempt upon that important city.

It was not until towards the middle of August that General Howe was joined by the main part of the expected troops from England. On their arrival, he determined, as the first step to the reduction of New York, to attack the Americans at Brooklyn. He sent over to Long Island a division—some 8000 strong: the English under General Clinton and Lord Cornwallis; the Hessians under General Heister and Count Donop. On the American side, the troops being reinforced from New York, were estimated by General Howe at 10,000 men, but in all probability were not more than equal in numbers to the British. Their chief, General Greene, had been smitten with a raging fever, and it had become necessary for Washington to despatch General Israel Putnam in his place. On the 24th, the 25th, and the 26th of August, there was some slight skirmishing between both armies, the American having advanced to a low range of hills about two miles and a half in front of the Brooklyn lines. On the 27th the English, marching to the attack before day-break, fought the action sometimes called the battle of Brooklyn, and sometimes the battle of Long Island. The Americans from the southern states fought well; the others made but slight resistance; but, indeed, raw levies such as these, even with some advantage of ground, were no match for disciplined troops. By noon the rout of the enemy was complete: they were driven back in confusion

\* *Greene, dont les talens n'étaient encore connus que de ses amis.* These are the words of La Fayette; Mem. et Corresp. vol. i. p. 21. ed. 1837.

to their lines, leaving on the field many hundreds killed and wounded, and above a thousand prisoners. Among these was General Sullivan, and another of their field-officers whom they called Lord Stirling. His name was William Alexander; he had been Surveyor-General of the Jerseys, and was a distant kinsman of the last Earls of Stirling, whose title he had claimed at the Bar of the House of Lords. The Lords, after full consideration of the evidence, decided against him. The Americans, however, with a nicer discrimination of the claims of peerage, acknowledged his pretension as well-founded, and consented to address him by the rank which he assumed. Neither Sullivan nor the titular Lord Stirling, I may remark in passing, were for any long period withdrawn from the service of their native or adopted country; for a cartel being established between the two armies, the prisoners on both sides came to be exchanged on equal terms.

Washington, who had hastened over from New York at the sound of the firing, beheld, with the keenest anguish, and without the power of giving aid, the discomfiture and slaughter of his best troops. He saw them pursued by the victorious British almost to the foot of the Brooklyn lines, and even those lines on the very point of being scaled. In the words of General Howe, who had also arrived upon the ground, "such was the eagerness (of my troops) to "attack the redoubt, that it required repeated orders to "prevail upon them to desist from the attempt. Had they "been permitted to go on, it is my opinion they would have "carried the redoubt; but as it was apparent the lines "must have been ours at a very cheap rate by regular "approaches, I would not risk the loss." By such ill-timed caution, arising probably from an over-estimate of the insurgents' force, the English General flung away the fairest opportunity of utterly destroying or capturing the flower of the American army. The respite thus afforded was most judiciously employed by Washington: he rallied as he best might his broken troops, and on the 28th and 29th awaited another battle at his lines. So great were his exertions and anxieties, that during forty-eight hours he was hardly off his horse, and never once closed his eyes. Yet his position was in truth untenable, and on the even-



ing of the 29th he determined, by the unanimous advice of a Council of War, to relinquish Long Island, and endeavour to transport his troops back again, across the ferry of the East River, to New York. It was a most difficult and delicate operation, in the face of a victorious enemy, to be accomplished only through the supineness of the British General, and under cover of a thick fog, which opportunely arose. Yet the Americans not merely removed their troops in safety, but carried with them their military stores and cannon, except only a few heavy pieces, which, soaked as was the ground by continued rain, could not be dragged along. With such silence and good order was everything conducted, that their last boat had pushed from the shore, and was crossing the river, before the British had discovered their retreat.

Thus had Washington, with great skill and judgment, once again secured his army in New York ; but he found it wholly unnerved by its late disaster. Here follows his own account of it, as given on the 2d of September to the President of Congress :—“ Our situation is truly distressing. The check our detachment sustained on the 27th of last month has dispirited too great a portion of our troops, and filled their minds with apprehension and despair. The Militia, instead of calling forth their utmost efforts, are dismayed, intractable, and impatient to return. Great numbers of them have gone off ; in some instances almost by whole regiments, by half ones, and by companies at a time . . . and with the deepest concern, I am obliged to confess my want of confidence in the generality of the troops. Till of late I had no doubt in my own mind of defending this place ; nor should I have yet, if the men would do their duty ; but this I despair of. It is painful and extremely grating to me to give such unfavourable accounts, but it would be criminal to conceal the truth at so critical a juncture.”

Meanwhile, the captivity of General Sullivan had suggested to Lord Howe, as principal Commissioner, the means of another overture for peace. He hoped that such an overture might carry the greater weight, and the more clearly indicate his conciliatory spirit as coming in the train not of disaster but of success. Accordingly, taking General Sullivan's parole, he requested him to proceed to

Philadelphia with a verbal message to the Congress. The message stated that at present he could not treat with Congress as such—that, nevertheless, he was very desirous of having a conference with some of the Members, whom for the present he would consider only as private gentlemen—that he would meet them himself as such at any place they might appoint—and that he wished a compact might be settled at this time, when no decisive blow was struck, and when neither party could say they were compelled to enter into terms. Upon this message, when Sullivan conveyed it, there ensued in Congress much hesitation and several keen debates. There was no longer a pretence for alleging the point of form, since Lord Howe proposed to waive it; the meeting to be on both sides as of private gentlemen only. But to allow the interview might cast a doubt on the reality of Independence; to decline it, would perhaps alienate, certainly offend, the more moderate party, especially when a word so attractive as “Compact” had been used. Upon the whole, the Congress, though with an ill grace, and after an elaborate protest, consented to the interview, the majority being swayed in no slight degree by the hope of proving to the public how limited and unsatisfactory were in truth the terms of the Howe Commission. Their adverse spirit plainly appeared in the choice of the Committee for this meeting. They elected three of the keenest and most uncompromising enemies to British connexion, namely, Dr. Franklin, John Adams of Massachusetts, and Edward Rutledge of South Carolina. On the 11th of September, by appointment with Lord Howe, the desired conference took place at a house on Staten Island, opposite the town of Amboy. “His Lordship,” say the Committee in their Report, “received and entertained us with the utmost “politeness.” But how changed both the scene and the temper of negotiation since Lord Howe and Dr. Franklin had first met in London, leaning in friendly converse over Mrs. Howe’s chess-board! Lord Howe argued earnestly that the Americans should return to their allegiance, and that if willing to submit they might obtain the most favourable terms. On the other hand, the Committee explicitly declared that the United Colonies would not accede to any peace unless as free and independent States.

At last, the British Admiral, with sorrow, closed the conference; and the American gentlemen wended back their way to Philadelphia.

This negotiation did not arrest—it had only rendered still less active—the movements of the British troops. Nearly all had by this time passed into Long Island, where they found themselves warmly welcomed. As Washington relates it, “I am sorry to say that from the “best information we have been able to obtain, the people “on Long Island have, since our evacuation, gone generally over to the enemy, and made such concessions as “have been required; some through compulsion, I suppose, “but more from inclination.”\* There was not wanting at that time around the American commander in chief the suggestion of the most desperate counsels. Thus, General Greene urged him to retreat at once from New York Island, but first to lay the entire city in ashes. This advice Greene gave in writing, and added this strong reason for it: “Two thirds of the property of the city “and suburbs belong to the Tories!” Still larger were the views of another patriot, John Jay. In the month ensuing he wrote as follows to a private friend: “Had I “been vested with absolute power in this State, I have “often said, and still think, that I would last spring have “desolated all Long Island, Staten Island, the city and “county of New York, and all that part of the county “of West Chester which lies below the mountains.”† Happily for these States, the wish of those who called themselves their truest and most thorough-going friends was not complied with. New York, in great part at least, was spared the ruin and anguish which, not the warring strangers, but her own sons had designed; for the proposal of burning the city being referred by Washington to Congress, was not approved by that body, which, on the contrary, enjoined him, in case of his retreat, to take special care that no damage should be done.

In this resolution, as in many others of popular assem-

\* To Governor Trumbull, September 9. 1776.

† For Greene's letter (Sept. 5. 1776) see a note to Sparks's Washington, vol. iv. p. 85. ; and for John Jay's (Oct. 6. 1776), the Life of President Reed, vol. i. p. 235.

blies, there appears to be a right conclusion arrived at from wrong premises. For the reason which the Congress themselves assigned for their orders was as follows — their full confidence that, if even their troops did leave New York, they would speedily be able to recover it. But, on the contrary, as the sequel will show, New York was held by the English until the very conclusion of the war.\*

The American army had been drawn by Washington in lines along the East River with the main body at Haerlem, a village about nine miles distant from New York. It was the evident design of the British, from their new position, and with the assistance of their fleet, to effect a landing on some point of New York Island. From several reports of their movements, Washington, on the night of the 14th, repaired in person to Haerlem. But next morning he was apprised that the first division of the British had crossed the stream at Kipp's Bay, between him and New York. What follows shall be told in his own words: "As soon as I heard the firing, "I rode with all possible despatch towards the place of "landing, when, to my great surprise and mortification, "I found the troops that had been posted in the lines "retreating with the utmost precipitation, and those "ordered to support them (Parsons's and Fellows's "brigades) flying in every direction and in the greatest "confusion, notwithstanding the exertions of their Generals to form them. I used every means in my power to rally and get them into some order, but my attempts "were fruitless and ineffectual, and on the appearance of a "small part of the enemy, not more than sixty or seventy, "their disorder increased, and they ran away in the "greatest confusion without firing a single shot." General Greene, in a private note, informs us further that, "Fellows's and Parsons's brigades ran away from "about fifty men, and left his Excellency on the ground "within eighty yards of the enemy, so vexed at the "infamous conduct of the troops that he sought death "rather than life." It is said that Washington, in his grief and shame, drew his sword, and threatened to run

\* Resolves of Congress, September 3, 1776.

his own men through, and also cocked and snapped his pistols at them. His attendants caught the bridle of his horse, and with some difficulty led him from the field.\*

In the lines which the Americans left on this occasion were found some hostile implements, such as the common consent of nations has declared unworthy of civilised or Christian warfare. The common men, it seems, or the inferior officers, had used them without the sanction of their chiefs. On this subject General Howe wrote as follows to General Washington; for by this time, notwithstanding the punctilio of rank, a correspondence had arisen between them for the exchange of prisoners. "My aide-de-camp will present to you a ball cut and fixed to the end of a nail, taken from a number of the same kind found in the encampment quitted by your troops on the 15th. I do not make any comment upon such unwarrantable and malicious practices, being well assured the contrivance has not come to your knowledge." Washington promptly replied: "The ball you mention, delivered to me by your aide-de-camp, was the first of the kind I ever saw or heard of. You may depend upon it the contrivance is highly abhorred by me, and every measure shall be taken to prevent so wicked and infamous a practice being adopted in this army."†

It is to be observed that during several previous days the Americans had been preparing to evacuate New York. "Had the landing of the enemy been delayed one day longer, we should have left them the city"—writes the Adjutant-General to his wife. Accordingly, on the 15th, the advancing British columns quietly took possession of the place; while General Putnam, with some three or four thousand of the insurgents, withdrew at their approach. It might have been easy (this the American annalists acknowledge) to have cut him off in his retreat along the North River; but that opportunity, as several both before and since, was lost upon General Howe. At New York, the British found themselves

\* Compare Sparks's Washington, vol. iv. p. 94., with Gordon's History, vol. ii. p. 327.

† Sparks's Washington, vol. iv. p. 107.

hailed as friends and deliverers by no small portion of the inhabitants. The most arbitrary violence had for some time past been practised against them. In many other places it was deemed sufficient to exclude the suspected Tory from the benefits of human society — to sign an engagement, solemnly renouncing all ties of business or of friendship with him.\* But at New York a great number of persons were suddenly arrested and sent to distant places of confinement, not for any crime imputed or alleged, but solely because, from the general tenor of their lives or their opinions, they were supposed to be unfriendly to the popular cause. Their offence, in short, was one for which the language of England scarcely affords a name, nor its history a precedent; it is best described in the Frenchmen's phrase, during their first Revolutionary period — *SOUPÇONNÉ D'ÊTRE SUSPECT!*

Whatever joy the loyalists remaining in New York may have felt at the sight of the King's troops was not long unalloyed. A few nights afterwards, the city was fired in several places at once; matches and other combustibles having been prepared and skilfully disposed. General Howe reports to Lord George Germaine that many of the incendiaries were detected in the fact, and some killed upon the spot by the infuriated troops. Notwithstanding every exertion on the part of the British chiefs, full one quarter of the city was thus consumed. It was believed by many persons that this conflagration might be traced to a secret order from American headquarters; but, considering the recent decision of Congress, and the personal character of Washington, the suspicion, though certainly natural, was as certainly unfounded.

The ill-conduct of the Americans, chiefly Connecticut men, on the 15th, was in some measure retrieved next day by another division, chiefly from Maryland and Virginia, which showed much gallantry in a little skirmish; and though the affair was slight, it gave more confidence to the remaining troops. Washington had now taken up his position on the heights of Haerlem, with lines across New York Island, which at that place is only a mile broad.

\* See one of these forms of *Ostracism* in the American Archives, vol. ii. p. 1678.



Close in his rear was the fort to which his countrymen had given his name; on the opposite side of the North or Hudson River was Fort Lee; and further behind him his communication with the main-land of New York over a narrow strait was secured by some works at Kingsbridge. His position was in truth a strong one, but less tenable from the utter want of discipline among his troops. The difference of conduct in the field between the men of the South and the men of the North had given a fresh edge to the old provincial jealousies. An officer at that time present with their army declares that even the Pennsylvania and New England troops would as soon fight each other as the enemy.\* Still more poignant are the complaints of Washington on "the infamous practice of plundering. For," he adds, "under the idea of Tory property, or property that "may fall into the hands of the enemy, no man is secure "in his effects and scarcely in his person. In order to "get at them we have several instances of people being "frightened out of their houses, under pretence of those "houses being ordered to be burnt, and this is done with "a view of seizing the goods. Nay, in order that the "villany may be more effectually concealed, some houses "have actually been burnt to cover the theft. I have, "with some others, used my utmost endeavours to stop "this horrid practice; but under the present lust after "plunder and want of laws to punish offenders, I might "almost as well attempt to move Mount Atlas."†

The Adjutant-General, writing in equal confidence, is not less explicit. "Where," says he, "so thorough a "levelling spirit predominates, either no discipline can "be established, or he who attempts it must become odious "and detestable. It is impossible for any one to have an "idea of the complete equality which exists between the "officers and men who compose the greater part of our "troops. You may form some notion of it when I tell "you that yesterday morning a Captain of Horse, who "attends the General, from Connecticut, was seen shaving "one of his men on the parade near the house!"‡

\* See this extract as given in Gordon's Hist. Amer. Rev. vol. ii. p 331.

† To the President of Congress, Sept. 24. 1776.

‡ J. Reed to Mrs. Reed, Oct. 11. 1776.

In this disorganised state of the soldiery it became a service of danger to aim at their correction or control. The same officer who beheld the shaving scene says in another letter that in the skirmish of the 16th, "the greatest escape I had was from one of our own rascals who was running away. Upon my driving him back, he presented his piece and snapped it at me about a rod distance. I seized a musket from another soldier, and snapped at him. He has since been tried, and is under sentence of death, but I believe I must beg him off, as after I found I could not get the gun off, I wounded him on the head, and cut off his thumb with my hanger."\*

This deplorable condition of the American troops was in great part owing to their system of short enlistments. During the last twelve months Washington had addressed to Congress the most urgent and most repeated representations against that system, but had found their theoretical jealousy of a standing army stronger than his warnings or their own experience. There was also, as a leading patriot complains, a disinclination in the gentlemen at Philadelphia to part with the smallest particle of their power.† It was not till the loss of New York was close impending that a better policy prevailed. Then, though not without strenuous opposition, it was resolved to form the army anew into eighty-eight battalions, to be enlisted as soon as possible, and to serve during the war. A certain number of battalions was assigned to each State as its quota; each State to appoint the officers as high as Colonels. To encourage enlistments a bounty of twenty dollars and one hundred acres of land was offered to each non-commissioned officer and soldier. But no sooner had these Resolves been passed than the Congress, by an error not uncommon in all popular assemblies, relaxed in their attention to the subject, as though a vote were sufficient for its own fulfilment. It became necessary for Washington to remind them gravely, that "there is a material difference between voting battalions and raising men."‡

\* Life and Correspondence of Reed, vol. i. p. 238.

† Letter of Benjamin Harrison to Washington, July 21. 1775, as printed in the American Archives.

‡ To the President of Congress, October 4. 1776.

Moreover the nomination of officers by the several States gave rise to another train of evils. A few weeks later Washington unbosoms himself as follows to his brother : —“ All the year I have been pressing Congress to delay “ no time in engaging men upon such terms as would “ insure success. telling them that the longer it was “ delayed the more difficult it would prove. But the “ measure was not commenced till it was too late to be “ effected ; and then in such a manner as to bid adieu to “ every hope of getting an army from which any services “ are to be expected ; the different States, without regard “ to the qualifications of an officer, quarrelling about the “ appointments, and nominating such as are not fit to be “ shoe-blacks, from the local attachments of this or that “ Member of the Assembly. I am wearied almost to death “ with the retrograde motion of things.”\*

This unprosperous state of their affairs inclined the Congress more and more to the quest of foreign aid. With that view they resolved at this period to appoint three commissioners, or secret envoys, at the Court of France. Dr. Franklin, notwithstanding his great age, was unanimously chosen. When the choice was first announced to him, he answered modestly, “ I am old, and “ good for nothing ; but, as the drapers say of their fag- “ ends of cloth, you may have me for what you please.” Yet the appointment of any such mission at all was against his own judgment. Only a few months afterwards we find him write as follows : —“ I have never yet “ changed the opinion I gave in Congress, that a virgin “ State should preserve the virgin character, and not go “ about suitoring for alliances, but wait with decent dig- “ nity for the applications of others. I was overruled, “ perhaps for the best.”† While Franklin was thus embarked in a new sphere, Silas Deane was continued at the post which he already filled. It would seem, however, that this gentleman was by no means most valued where he was best known, since his own State of Connecticut was the only one out of the thirteen that refused to vote

\* Writings, vol. iv. p. 184.

† Works, vol. viii. p. 209.

for him.\* Jefferson had been designed as the third Commissioner, but on his declining the appointment it devolved upon Arthur Lee. The latter, though for some years past he had practised as a barrister in London, was a native of Virginia, and a brother of Richard Henry Lee. Towards the first of November Dr. Franklin set forth on his voyage, not without some apprehensions of being captured by the English; but landed safe in Quiberon Bay, and before the close of the year had arrived at Paris.

Another subject which at this period greatly engaged the time and thoughts of Congress, was the framing Articles of Confederation. It was a requisite and yet by no means an easy task to define precisely which powers, as of national concern, should belong to the central body, and which, as of local administration, to the several States. These Articles, as decided after keen debates, were signed and made known at Philadelphia on the 4th of October, but did not become law by the ratification or accession of all the States until nearly three years afterwards. In the meanwhile there was no provision for Central Executive Government beyond the majority of Congress and the Standing Committees which the Congress was in the habit of appointing. But such Standing Committees were, in truth, only specious names. This has been clearly explained by a statesman who was himself at the head of three of them; a statesman among the most adroit and able of his day—Mr. Gouverneur Morris. “You must not imagine,” said he to a friend, “that the members of these Committees took any charge or burthen of the affairs.” For, as Mr. Morris proceeds to show, it was the object of his friends, while preserving the democratical form, to assume the monarchical substance, of business. It was the Chairman who received and answered all letters or other applications, who took every step which he deemed essential, who prepared reports, and who issued orders. As for the Committee, the Chairman merely from time to time led them into a private chamber, where, for form’s sake, he communicated to them his

\* Gardon’s History Amer. Rev., vol. ii. p. 372.

past proceedings and required their approbation, which was given as a matter of course.\*

Of the men who, thus wielding the Committees as their instruments, or standing forth in the Congress by themselves, held in their hands the reins of power, many were beyond all question well entitled to respect and confidence from their private characters. All of them did not, however, stand equally clear from imputation. See, for instance, the case of Mr. Samuel Adams. Before the passing of the Stamp Act he had been collector of the rates in the town of Boston, and treasurer of the money so collected. Take the sequel, not in the words of a stranger or an enemy, but as stated by a man of the same town, the same party, the same creed — by Dr. William Gordon: “His necessities probably, for he appears to be “addicted to no extravagance, urged him to supply himself time after time from the cash in hand. The town “had several meetings upon the business; at length, by “the exertion of his friends, a majority was obtained for “the relinquishment of the demand upon him.”† Mr. Samuel Adams appears also to be glanced at in an anonymous hand-bill which, at the commencement of 1775, was circulated through the town of Boston; it contains the expression: “Our leaders are desperate bankrupts.”‡ Whatever degree of truth there might or might not be in these charges against Samuel Adams, it is certain that they did not prevent him from attaining considerable influence in Congress. Jefferson says of him, that he had a greater share than any other member in advising and directing the conduct of the Northern War.§ On several occasions at least, he appears to have borne no good will to Washington, whose character was so far unlike his own; and both his name and influence may be traced in those secret cabals, which, at one time especially, were formed in Congress against that most eminent man.

\* Life of Gouverneur Morris, by Sparks, vol. i. p. 217.

† Hist. Amer. Rev., vol. i. p. 348. On this charge, see a note in my Appendix. In another passage of Gordon's History (p. 288.), the personal appearance of Mr. Samuel Adams is described — “with “his venerable grey locks and hands trembling under a nervous “complaint.”

‡ See the American Archives, vol. i. p. 1216

§ Letter to Mr. Wells, May 12. 1819.

In tracing the measures of Congress at this juncture, it is to be observed that while most of the Members were warm and zealous in prosecution of the war, there was not wanting a minority inclined to absolute and unconditional submission. So much danger would have been incurred by a manifestation of such views, that we cannot expect to find them in any manner clearly or explicitly avowed. But that such a party did exist at Philadelphia, and that in numbers it was considerable, is recorded by most unimpeachable authority; by the Adjutant-General of the American army, himself a Philadelphian, and connected with the chief houses of that city.\* Few things, indeed, are more remarkable than the lingering attachment to kingly government which may be traced in these insurgent Colonies. So strong was this feeling that, even when every hope was relinquished of returning to the sway of King George, there were some persons who in their stead turned their thoughts to the Pretender—to the Prince Charles of “The Forty-five.” Some letters to invite him over, and to assure him of allegiance, were addressed to him from Boston at the very commencement of the contest.† Thus, also, Mr. Washington Irving was assured by Sir Walter Scott, that among the Stuart Papers which Sir Walter had examined at Carlton House, he had found a Memorial to Prince Charles from some adherents in America, dated 1778, and proposing to set up his standard in the back settlements.‡ These men were not, and could not be, aware of the broken health and degraded habits into which their hero had fallen. They did not, they could not, know the details of his do-

\* To Mrs. Reed, October 11. 1776. Colonel Reed subjoins; “This letter, my dearest love, is written only for your own eye.”

† “L’Abbé Fabroni, Recteur de l’Université de Pise, m’a assuré avoir vu au commencement de la guerre d’Amérique des lettres des “Américains de Boston au Pretendant pour l’engager à aller se “mettre à leur tête.” (Dutens, *Memoires d’un Voyageur*, vol. iii. p. 30.)

‡ Visit to Abbotsford, by Washington Irving, p. 48. This Memorial has now disappeared from its place in the collection, as I learn from Mr. Glover, her Majesty’s librarian, who, at my request, in April, 1850, had the kindness to make search among the Stuart Papers of the year 1778, as then preserved in Windsor Castle.



mestic life at Florence. But such was still their reverence for Royalty that they desired to cling to it even where it might be only the shadow of a shade.

All this time the several States were busily employed in new-modelling their own Constitutions. To that course they had been invited by a Resolution of the Congress so early as the 15th of May. In nearly all the endeavour was apparent to retain as far as possible the ancient forms. But since Royalty was set aside, it became unavoidable to derive the whole powers of government, either mediately or immediately, from the people. Thus in each State there was still to be appointed a supreme executive head, with the title either of Governor or President. Such appointments, however, instead of forming a check on the popular impulse, would henceforth be only in one shape or another a manifestation of it. The new Governors were chosen, as of course, among the favourites of the ruling majority. In Virginia, for example, the new Governor was Patrick Henry. Eleven of the States maintained a Second Chamber, to be called in some cases the Council, in some others the Senate. Georgia and Pennsylvania alone resolved on trying the experiment of a single Chamber. In the Pennsylvania Convention that point is said to have been decided by a speech, or rather by a story, from Dr. Franklin. With his usual fondness for apologue, he told them a tale of a loaded waggon with a team at each end pulling in opposite directions. The other Pennsylvanians present appear to have considered this argument, if so it can be called, decisive of the question. Yet so ill did the working of a single Chamber speed in their province or in Georgia, that not many years elapsed ere in both it was abandoned; and since the further experience of France in her first Revolutionary period, the theory of Franklin on this subject has been, it is said, altogether exploded among his countrymen.\* Certain it is that periods may be shown in the more recent history of the United States, when nothing but the existence of a Second Chamber in their Congress has saved them from great dangers and from glaring faults.

From the formation of councils, we must now revert to

\* Sparks's Life of Franklin, p. 410

the conduct of the war. During several weeks General Washington remained on the heights of Haerlem, while General Howe continued at gaze. At last, towards the middle of October, the English commander put the greater part of his forces on board, and landed them at the extremity of Frog's Neck, on the continent of New York, and in Long Island Sound. There again he lost several days, kept in check apparently by the American outposts, and unable to reach the mainland over a ruined causeway. Once more he transported his troops, by water, to the adjoining promontory of Pell's Neck, and from thence began his march into the country. His movements had drawn the American army from the heights of Haerlem: it had, for the most part, passed the stream at Kingsbridge, and was now near the White Plains, already intrenched in its new position. Several skirmishes ensued, in which the British gained apparent success, but the Americans gradual experience. The chief skirmish—sometimes, indeed, it was termed a battle—took place on the 28th, near Chatterton's Hill, when the enemy gave way, retiring, however, from the ground in good order, and carrying off their artillery and wounded. It appears from General Howe's despatches, that next morning he contemplated an assault on the American camp, but was deterred by the apparent strength of its lines. Little did he know of what these lines, in truth, consisted! They were designed principally for defence against small arms, and had been reared in the utmost haste from the stalks of a large corn-field near the spot, the tops being turned inwards, and the stalks supported by the lumps of earth adhering to the roots.\* Such were now the obstacles before which a British chief recoiled! Deeming a new attack inexpedient, General Howe, on the morning of the 5th of November, suddenly drew off his troops to the left, in the direction of Kingsbridge, leaving the American chief in great doubt as to their further objects. "Some," writes Washington, "suppose they are going into winter quarters, and will sit down in New York without doing more than invest Fort Washington. I cannot subscribe wholly to this opinion myself." Surely General Howe

\* Memoirs of General Heath, p. 81. *apud* Reed.

“ must attempt something on account of his reputation,  
“ for what has he done as yet with his great army ? ”

It seemed not improbable that the King's troops might attempt an invasion of the Jerseys, and a push for Philadelphia. To defend these districts, General Washington crossed the Hudson with his army, and took post at Hackinsac. Meanwhile, on the 16th, Fort Washington was assaulted and carried by the British. The defence was continued during only four or five hours, the garrison being driven from the outer works, and then surrendering. No less than 2800 of the American troops became prisoners of war on this occasion. To have left any garrison in that fort, after the evacuation of New York Island, was certainly a great fault of strategy; and Washington, long afterwards, with noble frankness, spoke of it as such. But, in fact, the post had been held contrary to his own wishes and opinions, and his error lay only in having yielded these to the inferior judgment of other officers, especially of General Greene.

Sir William Howe (for the knighthood of the Bath had been recently conferred upon him; and Carleton, in like manner, had become Sir Guy) followed up his last advantage. Six thousand men, led by Earl Cornwallis, were landed on the Jersey side. At their approach, the Americans withdrew in great haste from Fort Lee, leaving behind their artillery and stores. Washington himself had no other alternative than to give way with all speed as his enemy advanced. He fell back successively upon Brunswick, upon Princeton, upon Trenton, and at last to the Pennsylvania side of the Delaware. To all these places, one after the other, did Lord Cornwallis, though slowly and with little vigour, pursue him.

This fair province of the Jerseys, sometimes surnamed the Garden of America\*, did not certainly, on this occasion, prove to be its bulwark. The scene is described as follows by one of their own historians, Dr. Ramsay:—  
“ As the retreating Americans marched through the  
“ country, scarcely one of the inhabitants joined them,  
“ while numbers were daily flocking to the Royal army

\* “ Les Jerseys . . . on les appelle le jardin de l'Amerique.”  
(Voyages du Marquis de Chastellux, vol. i. p. 146.)

“to make their peace and obtain protection. They saw “on the one side a numerous well-appointed and full-clad “army, dazzling their eyes with the elegance of uniformity; on the other a few poor fellows who, from their “shabby clothing, were called ragamuffins, fleeing for “their safety. Not only the common people changed “sides in this gloomy state of public affairs, but some of “the leading men in New Jersey and Pennsylvania “adopted the same expedient.”\* It is to be observed that the two Howes had issued a joint proclamation, offering a pardon to all such as had opposed the King’s authority who should within sixty days subscribe a declaration that they would remain in peaceable obedience to his Majesty. Such an offer might add to the effect of the British arms. Yet it seems scarcely just to the Americans to ascribe, with Dr. Ramsay, their change of sides to nothing beyond their change of fortune. May we not rather believe that a feeling of concern at the separation, hitherto suppressed in terror, was now first freely avowed — that in New Jersey, and not in New Jersey alone, an active and bold minority had been able to overrule numbers much larger, but far more quiescent and complying?

Another remark, by the same historian, might, as history shows, be extended to other times and other countries besides his own. The men who had been the vainest braggarts, the loudest blusterers in behalf of Independence, were now the first to veer round or to slink away. This remark, which Dr. Ramsay makes only a few years afterwards, is fully confirmed by other documents of earlier date, but much later publication — by the secret correspondence of the time. Thus writes the Adjutant-General: — “Some of our Philadelphia gentlemen who came over on visits, upon the first cannon went “off in a most violent hurry. Your noisy Sons of Liberty “are, I find, the quietest in the field.”† Thus, again, Washington, with felicitous expression, points a paragraph at the “chimney-corner heroes.”‡

\* History of the American Revolution, vol. i. p. 313.

† Life and Correspondence of Reed, vol. i. p. 231.

‡ Writings, vol. iii. p. 286.

At this period the effective force under Washington had dwindled to four thousand men. A separate division, of nearly equal strength, which he had entrusted to General Lee, was now, in like manner, slowly pursuing its march from the Hudson to the Delaware. Letter after letter — express after express — was sent by Washington to Lee, directing that officer to join him with all speed; but Lee, ever self-willed and perverse, paid no attention to these orders. He was busied in writing letters to find fault with the Commander-in-chief, when one evening, with the ink scarcely dry upon his paper, he was surprised and made prisoner by a party of dragoons under Colonel Harcourt — the same who in later life succeeded to the Harcourt Earldom, and the military rank of Field Marshal. Thus does Washington, in confidence, relate the transaction to his brother: — “The captivity of General Lee is an additional misfortune, and the more vexations as it was by his own folly and imprudence, and without a view to effect any good, that he was taken. As he went to lodge three miles out of his own camp, and within twenty of the enemy, a rascally Tory rode in the night to give notice of it to the enemy, who sent a party of Light Horse, that seized him and carried him off with every mark of triumph and indignity.” \*

The Congress at this juncture, like most other public assemblies, seemed but slightly affected by the dangers which as yet were not close upon them. On the 11th of December they passed some Resolutions contradicting, as false and malicious, a report that they intended to remove from Philadelphia. They declared that they had a higher opinion of the good people of these States than to suppose such a measure requisite, and that they would not leave the city of Philadelphia “unless the last necessity shall direct it.” These Resolutions were transmitted by the President to Washington, with a request that he would publish them to the army in General Orders. Washington, in reply, excused himself from complying with that suggestion. In thus declining it, he showed

\* Letter, December 18. 1776.

his usual sagacity and foresight. For, on the very next day after the first Resolutions the Congress underwent a sudden revulsion of opinion, and did not scruple to disperse in all haste, to meet again on the 20th of the same month, not at Philadelphia, but at Baltimore.

Under all these circumstances, Philadelphia would have fallen an easy prey to the British but for the exertions of Washington, who, on crossing the Delaware, took the utmost pains to collect all the boats upon the river, and remove them from the Jersey side. Moreover, it had formed no part of General Howe's expectations (as is plain from his own despatches) to carry the war beyond the Delaware, during this campaign. His recent successes induced him, though slowly, to extend his schemes. But instead of transporting or constructing boats, he resolved to wait until the winter ice should be formed upon the river; and meanwhile, remaining at New York, he allowed or directed Lord Cornwallis to "stand at ease," dispersing his troops in quarters through the Jerseys. Thus was some respite obtained by the harassed and dispirited remnant of the American army.—Oh for one hour of Clive!

During this much needed interval of leisure the American General gathered new strength. He was joined by levies from several quarters, by four regiments from the Northern army, and by the Philadelphia town and county Militia, which with great spirit had at once marched to his assistance. He could also for the future rely on the ready co-operation of the separate division, lately under Lee's command, and now under Sullivan's. Nevertheless his prospects, as against the British army's, whenever that should move, were most cheerless and forlorn. To his brother, writing on the 18th of December, he thus describes them:—"My dear Sir;—if every nerve be not strained to recruit the new army with all possible expedition, I think the game is pretty nearly up. This is owing, in a great measure, to the insidious arts of the enemy, and disaffection of the Colonies above mentioned, but principally to the ruinous policy of short enlistments, and placing too great a dependence on the Militia, the evil consequences of which were



“foretold fifteen months ago with a spirit almost  
“prophetic.”

It so chanced, that at this very juncture Washington received a visit in his camp from Benedict Arnold, who, it is said, first suggested to him the idea of attempting to recross the Delaware and surprise some part of the King's troops.\* But whoever may have the earliest devised this scheme, the merit of its details and execution belongs entirely to Washington. In front of him, at Trenton and at Bordentown, the barriers of the Jerseys, lay two bodies of Hessians, under Colonel Rahl and Count Donop. Both from their ignorance of the language, and from the hatred that the people bore them, these foreigners were least likely to obtain intelligence of his movements or designs. Moreover, by strange carelessness on the part of the British chiefs, the posts that were on this occasion the most exposed had been left the weakest manned, and undefended by a single entrenchment or redoubt. Under these circumstances Washington fixed on Trenton as the point of his attack. For the time he selected the night of Christmas, trusting that, after all the feasting and carousing of that day, the slumber of the Hessians might be soundest, and their discipline more than ever relaxed. Two days before he wrote to the Adjutant-General imparting his design. But he adds, “For Heaven's sake, keep this to yourself, as the discovery of it may prove fatal to us, our numbers, sorry am I to say, being less than I had any conception of; but necessity, dire necessity, will, nay, must, justify my attack.” It was, indeed, felt by Washington, that while success might brighten his prospects, no failure could make them darker than they were already.

On Christmas Day, accordingly, the evening had no sooner set in than Washington commenced his embarkation. He took with him 2,400 men, and 20 pieces of artillery, and had expected by four the next morning to reach

\* “From private information” to Mr. Adolphus (Hist. vol. ii. p. 440.). The same idea appears to have occurred at nearly the same time to several persons. On the 22nd, Reed inquires of Washington; “Will it not be possible, my dear General, for your troops to make a diversion or something more, at or about Trenton?”

Trenton. But his progress was so much delayed first by the floating ice upon the Delaware, and next by storms of snow and hail, that it was full eight o'clock before the two divisions in which he had ranged his troops, marching by different routes, came close upon the little town. Late as was the hour, it proved not too late for Washington's object of surprise. He opened his fire on both sides at once, and drove in the Hessian outposts; and "we presently," adds Washington, "saw their main body formed." On first perceiving their danger, the Light Horse and a few more fled by the bridge across the Assanpink, and made their way to Bordentown; but the main body, finding themselves surrounded, and without any means of escape, agreed to a surrender. Some more of their soldiers were afterwards found concealed in the houses, making the whole number of the prisoners little short of one thousand. Their commander, Colonel Rahl, a brave veteran, had been mortally wounded, and some twenty or thirty of their soldiers slain. The loss of the Americans had been slight indeed; only two privates killed, and two others frozen to death.

Thus successful in his enterprise, Washington on the very same day hastened back across the Delaware, in order to secure his prisoners. He expected that, on his withdrawing, the King's troops would at once return to Trenton. But another detachment of his army, with the Adjutant-General, having passed over from Bristol, found that, on the contrary, Count Donop had been seized with panic on learning the disaster of his comrades, that he had called in his scattered parties, had relinquished Bordentown, and was retreating in all haste by the Princeton road. In short, it appeared that the whole line of the British cantonments on the Delaware was broken through and falling back. At such tidings Washington determined to resume the offensive. Again he crossed over the Delaware with such force as he could muster, directed his detachments to join him, and with them, for the second time, took post at Trenton. Just at this critical moment, as the year was closing, the term of service of several regiments expired. At first the men seemed bent on going off in a body to their homes. But by the earnest persuasion of their officers, aided by a bounty of ten

dollars to each man, more than half of them consented to remain a few weeks longer.

Lord Cornwallis had already returned to head-quarters at New York. At the first news of Trenton he was forthwith ordered back to the Jerseys. Gathering the scattered parties that had lately lined the Delaware, and bringing forward fresh troops from Brunswick, he advanced in one compact body from Princeton. On the afternoon of the 2nd of January he came in sight of the American army, which at his approach retired from Trenton, and took post on some high ground beyond the Assanpink, guarding the bridge and the fords by their artillery. A battle, and in all likelihood a blow to the Americans, seemed impending for the morrow. But in the evening Washington assembled his officers in a Council of War, and laid before them a scheme which he had formed. From the numbers that Lord Cornwallis showed in front it seemed probable that but few remained in the rear. Might it not be possible by a night-march to surprise and overpower those few, and push onward to Brunswick, there capturing the military chest and stores, and releasing from captivity General Lee? The release of that officer, I may observe in passing, was an object of great interest to the Americans, since the British, on account of his former commission in their service, were disposed at this period to treat him, not as a prisoner of war, but as a deserter. It was not till many months afterwards that, on orders from home, and on vehement threats of retaliation by the Congress, they agreed to his exchange.

The plan thus skilfully formed was no less skilfully carried into execution. All night, to avert the suspicion of the British, the American fires were kept burning, and the guards ordered to remain at the bridge and fords. Meanwhile the baggage was sent off to the rear, in the direction of Burlington, and the army commenced its march with Quaker-like silence along what was called the Quaker road. Thus stealing forward on the east side of the Assanpink, they reached Princeton a little after sunrise.

In that town, as it chanced, three British regiments and three troops of Light Horse had passed the preceding night. Their numbers are not given with precision, but

would certainly be underrated were we to take Washington's account. For, on another occasion, at this period, when desiring rather to depreciate the force opposed to him, he computed that the Hessian regiments, when they came out complete, did not exceed 600, nor the British 250 men each.\* One of the regiments at Princeton — the 17th, under Colonel Mawhood — was already on its march to join Lord Cornwallis; of the other two, the 55th was just moving, and the 40th still at its quarters. In the grey of a winter morning the Colonel mistook the first ranks of the advancing enemy for Hessians, but on discovering his error, boldly charged them. Led on by Mawhood, the gallant 17th pressed forward with bayonets fixed, threw the American vanguard into confusion, and though of course unable to contend for any length of time against the growing numbers of the foe, still it cut its way through, and pursued its march to Lord Cornwallis without further hurt or hindrance. The 55th and 40th were not so fortunate. They made a brave resistance, especially the 55th which came up the first; but exposed to so great disparity of numbers, they were overpowered. Finally, they were repulsed, and driven back in disarray along the road to Brunswick, leaving behind one hundred dead, and three hundred prisoners. There were also three brass field-pieces, which for want of horses, the American commander could not secure. On his side, there fell one of his Generals, named Mercer, and four Colonels or Captains, but no more, as he states, than twenty-five or thirty privates. During this action Washington himself, with the utmost intrepidity, appeared in the thickest of the fight, animating his men by his example even to the alarm and dissatisfaction of his officers.† On the other hand, the British troops evinced so much of steady courage and discipline under every disadvantage, as to warrant their chiefs in the belief that had the 40th come up in time from Princeton, and the three regiments

\* To Governor Cooke, April 3. 1777.

† One officer writes from Morristown a few days afterwards: "Our army love their General very much, but they have one thing against him, which is the little care he takes of himself in any action." Note by Mr. Sparks to Washington's Writings, vol. iv. p. 262.

formed in line together, they might have stood firm against all the efforts of the not large nor well-appointed American army, and enabled Lord Cornwallis to take it in the rear.

Washington did not find it possible to fulfil his first intentions, and push onward to Brunswick. His men were exhausted with fatigue, having been eighteen hours without food, and thirty-six without rest; most of them were ill-clad, and many barefoot. Moreover Lord Cornwallis, seeing at day-break that the American army was no longer before him, and hearing the guns in his rear, was hastening back with all speed to Princeton and to Brunswick, there to secure his reserve and magazines. The American General therefore desisted from pursuit of the two defeated regiments, and turned aside towards Pluckemin; first, however, destroying the bridge over Stoney Brook, and thus retarding any pursuit of himself. Two days afterwards he moved to Morristown, a position among the hills, not easy of access yet well provided with supplies. From thence sending out detachments he overran and reduced nearly the whole of the Jerseys. General Howe, not willing to be roused from his winter quarters at New York, seemed content to lose the province so lately gained, and satisfied with merely retaining posts at Brunswick and Amboy.

At this time one of Washington's detachments, under General Heath, was pushed forward, even beyond the Hudson, in the direction of Kingsbridge. There the British held a fort, which, though in their possession, retained the name which the Americans had given it—Fort Independence. To this fort General Heath sent a summons to surrender, couched in the most peremptory terms. "Twenty minutes only can be allowed for the garrison to give their answer; and should it be in the negative, they must abide the consequences." The garrison returned no answer, but found no consequences follow, since the fort was not attacked, and General Heath quietly withdrew. For this ridiculous affair he was properly rebuked by Washington.\*

\* "Your summons, as you did not attempt to fulfil your threats, was not only idle but farcical, and will not fail of turning the

Thus concluded the campaign of this year. The surprise at Trenton, and the skirmish at Princeton — both of which the Americans have dignified with the name of battles — are not to be estimated solely by their rank as feats of arms. Their results, moral as well as military, were of very high importance. In the first place they had saved Philadelphia, and arrested the conquering progress of the British troops. Next, as we have seen, they replaced the Jerseys beneath the sway of Congress. No greater act of impolicy can well be imagined than that the British General should tamely acquiesce in the reduction of a province which had so recently and so warmly espoused his cause, thus exposing the loyalists within it to every kind of persecution and ill-treatment, and discouraging most effectually the loyalists elsewhere.

Hardly less impolitic, hardly less injurious, had been the license allowed the troops, and above all, the foreign mercenaries, while this province still continued in their hands. Acts of plunder, or of insult, not promptly repressed, nor duly punished, led of course to alienation and resentment. The details of any such outrages, sometimes taken on oath, but more frequently magnified by rumours and surmises, were published in the American newspapers, as incentives against the King and people of Great Britain. There is then no cause for wonder, if by such deplorable excesses in the men, and remissness in the chiefs, the temper of the Jerseys, of late so favourable, was wholly changed. As the American troops advanced they observed, at least in some districts, that almost every house on the road had a red rag nailed upon the door, as a token of attachment to the Crown; but all such tokens the inhabitants were now busy pulling down.\*

The moral effects of Washington's successes were felt throughout the United States. In the strong words of one of their own historians, it seemed like a resurrection from the dead.† Washington himself, indeed, had never

"laugh exceedingly upon us." To Major General Heath, February 3. 1777. See also Heath's Memoirs, pp. 107. 113., as cited by Mr. Sparks.

\* Life and Correspondence of Reed, vol. i. p. 280.

† Ramsay vol. i. p. 326.



ceased to be serene and self-assured. In the lowest depths of fortune he said calmly to one of his chief officers, that he should strive to the last, retiring, if need were, from State to State, and from post to post, and if even forced back from all, maintaining the war beyond the Alleghany mountains.\* But many others, who in bygone years had bawled while he was quiet, and who had blamed him for being so, were now wavering and whispering, while he continued firm. There was a general gloom and despondency, an idea that the British arms were irresistible, and that the struggle for Independence was drawing to a close. In this state of public feeling, the recruiting for the new army, on which all Washington's hopes depended, made no progress. By the days of Trenton, and of Princeton, this state of public feeling was reversed. They had shown that it was not merely behind entrenchments and redoubts that the American forces could fight; but that even in the open field, under favourable circumstances, they could cope with, and might overpower, their disciplined and veteran foes. Confidence returned, and with confidence exertion. New recruits began to come in, and some of the older enlisted were persuaded to remain, while clothing, stores, and other requisites for them were more freely supplied.

In no place was the change of temper more marked and more apparent, than in the ranks of Congress. When that assembly met again at Baltimore, so keen was their sense of the present peril, as to overcome what hitherto had been among their main principles of action,—their dislike of a standing army, their distrust of a military chief. On the day after the affair of Trenton, but of course before its issue could be known, they conferred upon their General, for six months to come, powers of the most extensive kind,—the powers, in truth, of a Dictator. Washington was authorised to raise sixteen battalions in addition to those already voted; to apply at his pleasure to any of the States for the aid of their Militia; to appoint and displace all officers below the rank of Brigadier-General; to take, wherever he might be, whatever he might want for the use of his army, allowing a reasonable price for the same;

\* Ramsay, vol. i. p. 310.

to arrest and confine all persons who should refuse to take the continental currency, or who had given any other proof of disaffection to the cause. The extraordinary powers thus entrusted to him, were acknowledged by Washington in the most dutiful and becoming spirit. Referring to them, he says, "Instead of thinking myself freed from all civil obligations, by this mark of the confidence of Congress, I shall constantly bear in mind, that as the sword was the last resort for the preservation of our liberties, so it ought to be the first thing laid aside when those liberties are firmly established. I shall instantly set about making the most necessary reforms in the army."\*

When, however, the day of Princeton had been fought, — when the Jerseys were recovered, and when, a few weeks afterwards, the Congress were enabled to return from Baltimore to Philadelphia, — they passed from their late dismay to overweening confidence. They seemed to think that it was only the caution of their General which prolonged the war, as if he need only lift his hand to annihilate and exterminate the entire British army! To their suggestions on this subject Washington replies on the 14th of March, with his usual clear good sense, and not without a touch of humour. He declares that he should be happy indeed if he could accomplish the important objects so eagerly wished by Congress, namely, "confining the enemy within their present quarters; preventing their getting supplies from the country; and totally subduing them before they are reinforced." "But," adds Washington, "what prospect or hope can there be of my effecting so desirable a work at this time? The whole force I have in Jersey is but a handful:" and he then proceeds to explain why his force in Jersey was not only small, but ill-appointed. Perhaps we may

\* Letter, January 1. 1777. Even in England, at that time, the new Dictator came to be surnamed, in compliment, the American Fabius. (See Annual Regist. 1777, p. 20.) The American writers add, and are well justified in adding, that to no man more truly than to Washington might be applied these lines on Fabius, which Ennius wrote, and Cicero records :

"Unus qui nobis cunctando restituit rem :

"Non ponebat enim rumores ante salutem ;

"Ergo magisque, magisque Viri nunc gloria claret."

suspect that, in the high-flown hopes which they formed, some at least of the members of Congress were misled by the high-flown terms which they employed. Like the Spanish chiefs and statesmen of old, and down to the present day, they had grown fond of bestowing exalted epithets upon their cause and country, until at last they wrought themselves into believing all their own compliments realities.\*

General Howe, and consequently General Washington, remained nearly at rest during several months. A division of the British army under General Clinton had been sent some time before to winter in Rhode Island. As Clinton approached, the enemy retired from the island, of which, therefore, he took peaceable possession, while the ships that brought him blockaded an American squadron under Commodore Hopkins, in the Providence river. It was, however, on the whole, an ill-judged expedition, which answered little purpose but to keep a large body of troops unemployed during three years. In February Washington took measures for inoculating, systematically, and by successive detachments, his whole force, the small-pox having proved a dreadful scourge to the Americans in their previous warfare. In March a detachment from New York destroyed the American barracks and stores at Peek's Hill. In April another detachment did similar service on a larger scale, and with a greater resistance, at Danbury. On the other hand, the Americans succeeded in burning some brigs and sloops belonging to the British at Sagg's Harbour in Long Island. But, until the return of summer, nothing of more importance was achieved on either side.

\* In a lively work of our own time — "Les Soirées de Neuilly" — may be seen described the weariness of the French officers under the Duke d'Angoulême, in 1823, at the oft-recurring phrase of each Spanish *Alcalde*: "Seigneur commandant, je viens vous complimenter au nom des heroïques habitans de cette ville!" (p. 298) Several towns, Madrid especially, rejoice in the official title of *Eroica*.

## CHAPTER LV.

THE Session of Parliament, which had commenced on the last day of October, 1776, continued till June 1777. In it, as in the previous ones, America formed the principal topic of discussion. Even at the outset, an amendment to the Address upon this ground was moved by Lord Rockingham in one House, by Lord John Cavendish in the other. So small were then the minorities,—no more than 46 of the Peers, no more than 87 of the Commons, and even these 87 on a subsequent motion dwindling to one-half,—that the members, especially of the Rockingham section, lost heart and hope. Without any formal secession, they began to relax in their Parliamentary attendance, declaring that there was no such thing as saving a people against its will. One of their warmest partisans and defenders—in all probability no other than Burke himself—declares of them at this juncture that they appeared in their places, “only upon such matters “of private Bills in which they had some particular “concern or interest.”\* In other words, they neglected the public business, but applied themselves to their personal affairs. And such conduct was called patriotism!

It is worthy of remark throughout these debates how greatly Fox had risen in importance. A report being spread at Arthur’s Club that he intended to go for a few weeks to Paris, and that report being carried to the King, His Majesty wrote forthwith to Lord North, advising the Minister to bring forward his measures as quickly as he could during the absence of so much “noisy declamation.”† So keen—we may also note in passing—was Fox at this time, against the success of his King and country’s arms, that in his confidential letters we find him refer to our

\* Annual Register, 1777, p. 48.

† Letter, November 15. 1776.

victory at Brooklyn as "the terrible news from Long Island."\*

Later in the Session, there was certainly no point on which Fox and his friends had greater scope for their abilities, than when Lord North found himself under the necessity of announcing the new debts which had accrued upon the Civil List, and which amounted to more than 600,000*l*. Some part of this expense, as Lord North explained it, might, like other evils, be ascribed to the struggle in America, since there so many loyalists had been stripped of their property, and driven from their homes, without any means of sustenance beyond the bounty of the Crown. But another, and, probably, still more effective cause, as in an earlier Chapter I have shown, was the ill-regulated state of several departments in the Royal Household. The profusion and extortion which there prevailed were wholly independent of the will and example of the Sovereign, and for their amendment needed no less than Burke's great measure of Economical Reform. Notwithstanding all the efforts of Opposition, the House of Commons agreed, not only to discharge these arrears, but with the view of guarding against such arrears for the future, to grant to the Crown, by Bill, a further yearly sum of 100,000*l*.

This Bill, entitled "For the better Support of the Royal Household," was of itself invidious, and unhappily became the more so from the circumstances of its passing. The Speaker, Sir Fletcher Norton, having now some private grudges against the Government, had determined to indulge them. It became his duty to present this Bill to the King, seated on the throne, and surrounded by the chief officers of State. It became his privilege, if he pleased, on that occasion to address his Sovereign. "Sir," said Mr. Speaker, "in a time of public distress, full of difficulty and danger, their constituents labouring under burdens almost too heavy to be borne, your faithful Commons postponed all other business, and with as much despatch as the nature of their proceeding would admit, have not only granted to

\* To Lord Rockingham, Oct. 13. 1776. *Memoirs by Lord Albemarle*, vol. ii. p. 297. (1853.)

“your Majesty a large present supply, but also a very  
“great additional revenue — great beyond example —  
“great beyond your Majesty’s highest wants!” Afterwards, in printing, the last word was corrected by the Speaker to “expenses.” It may easily be imagined how much gratification this speech afforded to one side of the House, and how much resentment it called forth on the other. A vote approving it was proposed by the Opposition, and of course much disrelished by the Ministry; but, being most consistent with form and quiet, was, after some debate, allowed to pass.

It was certainly felt on all hands, as the Speaker had, with no great respect, implied, that the appeal in behalf of the Civil List, however unavoidable, was most ill-timed. It was made in a year when the charges for the navy rose to upwards of four millions, and the charges for the army nearly approached the same sum; when it was deemed requisite to impose a tax on male servants, a further stamp on deeds, and an auction duty; and when, notwithstanding these aids, it became necessary to add five millions to the funded debt.\*

The public would no doubt have borne this increase of its burdens with still more dissatisfaction, had the public known how rotten at this period was our whole system of commissaries and contractors — how ill, in fact, the money raised in England was applied abroad. To this charge I will summon as my witness Lord North’s own Solicitor-General. Thus, in 1777, did Mr. Wedderburn write respecting our army in America to a confidential friend: — “The peculation in every profitable branch of  
“the service is represented to be enormous, and, as usual,  
“it is attended with a shocking neglect of every comfort  
“to the troops. The hospitals are pest-houses, and the  
“provisions served out are poison; those that are to be  
“bought are sold at the highest prices of a monopoly.”†

Another measure, which was met by considerable opposition, and not carried without some amendments, was

\* Parl. Hist. vol. xix. pp. 241. 271. In the debate on the Budget, Lord North observed that there were some persons who kept thirty or more male servants.

† Letter to William Eden, printed from the MS. in Lord Campbell’s *Lives of the Chancellors*, vol. vi. p. 118.



a partial suspension of the Habeas Corpus—a Bill empowering His Majesty to secure and detain persons charged with or suspected of the crime of high treason committed in North America, or on the high seas, or the crime of piracy. “The thing is this,” said Lord North; “there have been during the present war in America many prisoners made who were in actual commission of the crime of high treason; and there are persons guilty of that crime who might be taken, but from want of evidence could not be kept in gaol.” Our own liberties are in danger!—such was the reply of Dunning, Wilkes, and Fox. “Who knows,” cried Fox, “but the Ministers, in the fulness of their malice, may take it into their heads that I have served on Long Island, under General Washington? What would it avail me in such an event to plead an ALIBI; to assure my old friends that I was during the whole of the autumn American campaign in England; that I was never in America, nor on any other sea but between Dover and Calais; and that all my acts of piracy were committed on the mute creation? All this may be very true, says a Minister or a Minister’s understrapper, but you are for the present suspected; that is sufficient; this is no time for proofs. I know you are fond of Scotland; I will send you under this Sign Manual to study the Erse language in the Isle of Bute. As soon as the operation of the Bill is spent, you will be at liberty to return whither you please; and then you may, if you like, call on your accusers to prove their charges of treason in America, or on the high seas, or of piracy. But they will laugh in your face, and tell you they never charged you, they only suspected you!”

While thus, within the walls of Parliament, imaginary apprehensions passed for arguments, there were out of doors strong proofs of other and more real dangers resulting from the partisans or the emissaries of America. On the 7th of the preceding December, a considerable building in the Dockyard at Portsmouth, called the Rope-house, had been consumed by fire. Through great exertions the further progress of the flames had been arrested, and their origin was ascribed to accident, until several

weeks afterwards, when some combustibles were found concealed in another large building of the same establishment — the Hemp-house. Happily, notwithstanding the vast stores of hemp, these last combustibles had failed in their effect, but their appearance made it plain that in all probability, not accident, but design, had caused the first calamity. Suspicion fell upon a moody, sullen artisan, whose name had not been known, but who, from his calling, had borne the surname of John the Painter. This fellow, it was now remembered, had been seen on the day of the fire loitering about the Rope-house and the Hemp-house, and by some chance, on the preceding night, had been locked into the former. A reward was offered for his apprehension, but all trace of him was gone, and on searching through Portsmouth and its neighbourhood no such person could be found. In the mean time other incendiary attempts were made in various places. At Plymouth the design was wholly frustrated, and the perpetrator nearly seized. At Bristol, also, the villain failed in an attempt to set fire to some vessels, and found so strict a watch kept on them afterwards, that he was obliged to change his plan of operations. He succeeded in setting fire to some warehouses which stood upon the quay, close upon a crowded mass of shipping; and six or seven of these houses were consumed while the shipping narrowly escaped. In another house of the same city fresh combustibles were found, and there was general panic, but great variety of surmises. The one party ascribed these things to American and Republican principles in the other; while in the party thus impugned the more violent men declared themselves fully convinced that these were malicious acts or inventions of the Tories, merely for the purpose of calumniating and blackening their adversaries.\*

Happily these days of doubt and terror did not long endure. In the beginning of February, a countryman being apprehended at Odiham on a charge of burglary, was identified as John the Painter, and sent up to London

\* Ann. Regist. 1777, p. 30. See also in Burke's Correspondence (vol. ii. p. 136.), the letter to him from Sir Abraham Elton, of Bristol.

for examination. His true name was Aitken, but at various times he had borne many different appellations; he was a native of Edinburgh, and only twenty-four years of age. Three years before he had gone to seek his fortune in America. There he had wrought at his trade, travelling on foot through several of the Colonies, and imbibing a hatred of his native country. After his return to England, he became concerned in numerous petty acts of theft and depredation, besides the graver crime of which he stood accused. When brought before Sir John Fielding and other magistrates in London, he showed great craft and coolness, parrying every doubtful question or declining a reply to it. He was committed to prison, but there seemed the utmost difficulty in bringing home the charge to him.

The miscreant did not escape, however. It so chanced that there was another painter, named Baldwin, who had likewise travelled in America, and who was known to Earl Temple. At his Lordship's suggestion this man was summoned to Sir John Fielding's, to determine whether he had ever seen or met the prisoner. As it happened, Baldwin had not; and so he told the magistrates, in the hearing of the culprit, who, in acknowledgment, made him a bow. An acquaintance between them having thus arisen, some conversation ensued in the next room; and Baldwin paid the prisoner frequent visits in the gaol, when, pretending to hold the same principles, he gained his entire confidence. The result was communicated by Baldwin in the first place to Earl Temple, and afterwards, at Earl Temple's desire, to Lord George Germaine. John the Painter was by degrees drawn in to own to his false friend that he was engaged in a design of setting fire to the several dockyards, and thus destroying the navy of Great Britain, and that he had been more than once to Paris to concert his measures for that object with Mr. Silas Deane. "Do you not know Silas Deane?" he asked. "What, no—not Silas Deane? He is a fine clever fellow; and I believe Benjamin Franklin is employed on the same errand."\* The prisoner added that Silas Deane

\* Howell's State Trials, vol. xx. p. 1335. Dr. Franklin stands perfectly clear of any communication or connexion with John the

had encouraged him in his noble enterprise, inquiring all the particulars, and supplying him with the money he wanted. He then proceeded to relate how, on his way from Paris, he had stopped at Canterbury to have his combustibles and machinery prepared; how from Canterbury he had gone to Portsmouth; how he there had quarrelled with his landlady, who had pried into his bundle; how he had succeeded in lodging his materials both in the Rope-house and the Hemp-house; how, on the same afternoon, he had hurried from the town, often turning round in hopes to see the result; and how, only a few minutes after he had passed the last sentries, he looked back and beheld the flames ascend. "The very 'elements,'" he said, exultingly, "seemed to be in a 'blaze!'"

Early in March the incendiary was brought to trial at the Winchester Assizes. To his surprise and dismay he saw his friend Baldwin stand forth as the principal evidence against him. It appeared, however, that the prisoner's narrative to Baldwin, as repeated by the latter, was in many minute circumstances most fully confirmed by other witnesses—as by the tinman at Canterbury, and the landlady at Portsmouth,—and the Jury, without doubt or hesitation, returned a verdict of Guilty. John the Painter seemed to be resigned and ready for his doom. When Mr. Baron Hotham told him at the close, "I can 'give you no hopes of pardon,'" the prisoner answered firmly, "I do not look for it, my Lord;" and when the same Judge was proceeding to pass what he termed "the 'painful sentence of the law,'" the prisoner, interrupting him, said "joyful." On the 10th of March he was hanged at Portsmouth, on a gallows sixty feet high, in front of the Dockyard, having first been carried in an open cart round the ruins of the Rope-house. His last words, as he gazed on those ruins, were to acknowledge his crime, and declare

Painter; he had only just landed from America; and on the day of the fire at Portsmouth (Dec. 7. 1776), he was still at Nantes. Yet some persons may consider as significant the hint which he drops in a letter to Dr. Priestley many months before: "England has 'begun to burn our sea-port towns; secure, I suppose, that we 'shall never be able to return the outrage in kind.'" (Works, vol. viii. p. 156.)

his penitence. Indeed he had already, on the day after his trial, made a full confession, owning his incendiary attempts at Portsmouth, at Plymouth, and at Bristol, and repeating his former statement as to Silas Deane. "Mr. Deane told me, when the work was done, by which he meant burning the Dockyards at Portsmouth, Woolwich, and Bristol Harbour, but not the houses, I should make my escape, and come, if possible, to him at Paris, and I should be rewarded. As a reward, my own expectations prompted me to hope that I should be preferred to a commission in the American army." In this confession, John the Painter added, that with respect to another American, Dr. Bancroft, who resided in London, and on whom Mr. Deane had directed him to call, he had found that gentleman wholly adverse to his schemes. "And seeing that the Doctor did not approve of my conduct, I said I hoped that he would not inform against me, to which the Doctor said, he did not like to inform against any man."\*

Another trial, at nearly the same period, appears to have attracted more than common interest. The Rev Mr. Horne had at length flung off his clergyman's gown, which, by his own showing, he should have long since laid aside, or never worn.† He now called himself John Horne, Esquire, and as such, continued active and eager on the democratic side. In the summer of 1775, he had taken the lead in a subscription which he had announced as being for "the relief of the widows, orphans, and aged parents of our beloved American fellow-subjects, who faithful to the character of Englishmen, and preferring death to slavery, were for that reason only inhumanly murdered by the King's troops at or near Lexington and Concord, on the 19th of last April." For the libel comprised in these words he was indicted,

\* See the whole confession in Howell's State Trials, vol. xx. p. 1365.

† Mr. Horne did not resign his vicarage of New Brentford till 1773. (Life by Stephens, vol. i. p. 419.) Yet so early as 1766 we find him write to Wilkes as follows: "It is true I have suffered the infectious hand of a Bishop to be waved over me. I allow that usually at that touch — *fugiant pudor, verumque, fidesque*; but I hope I have escaped the contagion." (Ibid. p. 76.)

and, after some of those delays in which our law delights, was brought to trial in the summer of 1777. The presiding Judge on this occasion was Lord Mansfield, recently raised to an Earldom; and on the part of the Crown appeared the Attorney-General, Thurlow. Horne conducted his own defence, in rambling, but acute and able speeches, sparing neither the Judge on the bench, nor yet the Administration, nor yet the Parliament. Nevertheless he was found Guilty, and sentenced to imprisonment for the space of twelve months.

A few days only before the Session terminated, Lord Chatham, after two years of sickness and seclusion, once again emerged. He had desired his friend Lord Camden to give a notice in his name; and on the 30th of May, still swathed in flannels, he went to the House of Lords. There he moved an Address to the Crown, lamenting the unnatural war against the British Colonies in America, and beseeching His Majesty to take the most speedy measures for arresting it, upon the only just and solid foundation, namely, the removal of accumulated grievances. "You cannot conquer the Americans!" he cried. "You talk of your powerful forces to disperse their army; why—" and here he raised, and showed, the support to his gouty limbs—"I might as well talk of driving them before me with this crutch! . . . You have ransacked every corner of Lower Saxony; but 40,000 German boors never can conquer ten times the number of British freemen; they may ravage—they cannot conquer! But what would you conquer—the map of America? And what will your troops do out of the protection of your fleet? In the winter, if together, they are starved, and if dispersed, they are taken off in detail. I am experienced in spring hopes and vernal promises; I know what Ministers throw out; but at last will come your equinoctial disappointments. You have got nothing in America but stations. You have been three years teaching them the Art of War, and they are apt scholars. What you have sent are too many to make peace,—too few to make war. If you did conquer them, what then? You cannot make them respect you; you cannot make them wear your cloth: you will plant an invincible hatred in their breasts



“ against you. Coming from the stock they do, they  
“ never can respect you. If Ministers are founded in  
“ saying there is no sort of treaty with France, there is  
“ still a moment left; the point of honour is still safe.  
“ . . . . I have at different times made different pro-  
“ positions adapted to the circumstances in which they  
“ were offered. The plan contained in my former Bill  
“ is now impracticable; the present motion will tell you  
“ where you are, and what you have now to depend upon.  
“ It may produce a respectable division in America, and  
“ unanimity at home; it will give America an option;  
“ she has yet had no option. You have said, ‘ Lay down  
“ ‘ your arms ;’ and she has given you the Spartan answer,  
“ — ‘ Come and take them !’ ”

Lord Chatham, then reciting the words of his motion, proceeded to enforce them. “ The proposal,” he said, “ is  
“ specific. I thought this so clear, that I did not enlarge  
“ upon it. I mean the redress of all their grievances, and  
“ the right to dispose of their own money. This is to be  
“ done instantaneously. I will get out of my bed to move  
“ it on Monday. This will be the herald of peace; this  
“ will open the way for treaty; this will show Par-  
“ liament sincerely disposed. . . . If a treaty with France  
“ were to appear, that moment you must declare war,  
“ though you had only five ships of the line in England :  
“ but France will defer a treaty as long as possible. You  
“ are now at the mercy of every little German chancery ;  
“ and the pretensions of France will increase daily, so as  
“ to become an avowed party in either peace or war.  
“ We have tried for unconditional submission ; try what  
“ can be gained by unconditional redress. Less dignity  
“ will be lost in the repeal, than in submitting to the de-  
“ mands of German chanceries. We are the aggressors.  
“ We have invaded them. We have invaded them as  
“ much as the Spanish Armada invaded England. Mercy  
“ cannot do harm : it will seat the King where he ought  
“ to be—throned in the hearts of his people ; and millions  
“ at home and abroad, now employed in obloquy or revolt,  
“ would pray for him ! ”

The debate which ensued upon this motion, called forth the highest energies of both contending parties. On the one side there spoke Lord Gower and the second Lord

Lyttleton, Lords Mansfield and Weymouth, and Dr. Markham, newly named Archbishop of York. On the other side were the Dukes of Grafton and Manchester, Lords Camden and Shelburne, and Dr. Hinchcliffe, Bishop of Peterborough. Chatham himself exerted his right of reply. Among the strangers present on this occasion, as in 1775, was his son William, who next morning wrote to Lady Chatham as follows: "My father's first speech took up half an hour, and was full of all his usual force and vivacity. I only regretted that he did not always raise his voice enough for all the House to hear every thing he said. . . . He spoke a second time in answer to Lord Weymouth, to explain the object of his motion, and his intention to follow it by one for the repeal of all the Acts of Parliament which form the system of chastisement. This he did in a flow of eloquence, and with a beauty of expression, animated and striking beyond conception."—Such praise of Chatham's eloquence from so affectionate a son might deserve no credit, did we not find it confirmed, nearly to its full extent, from his political opponents. Yet, perhaps, all that eloquence came too late: certainly it was exerted in vain. A large majority of the Peers present (76 against 26) rejected the Earl's motion; and the Session of Parliament closed without any overture of reconciliation towards America.

In the course of this summer, Lord Chatham underwent another severe illness. As he was riding at Hayes, he was smitten with some kind of stroke: he fell from his horse, and lay senseless for ten minutes. His friends endeavoured to keep this event a profound secret from the world. They did not entirely succeed; yet it remained unknown to all the earlier biographers, and was first divulged to this age through the confidential letter in which Lord Camden relates it to the Duke of Grafton. Lord Camden adds, "Whether this was apoplectic, paralytic, or gout in the stomach, I cannot learn. I wish it may not prove fatal." Only a few weeks later the same friend was enabled to write, "Your Grace will not be sorry to hear that the Earl is now—though it seems almost miraculous—in bodily health, and in mental vigour, as

“equal to a strenuous exertion of his faculties, as I have known him these seven years.”\*

At Paris, the progress of the American War excited scarcely less interest or attention than in London. Both Franklin and Silas Deane found themselves, though in secret, yet favourably received by the Count de Vergennes. They continued busily employed in making overtures and urging treaties to the Court of France; while Arthur Lee, who had arrived from England, was despatched on the same errand to the Court of Spain. In these overtures, judging from the instructions sent out, the Congress showed utter disregard of any rights besides their own. They directed their plenipotentiaries to promise that, in case France and Spain would enter into the war, the United States would assist the former in the conquest of the British sugar islands, and the latter in the conquest of Portugal.† Yet, even on their own rules, and adopting their own point of view—if, as they said, England had no right to crush the independent State of North America—could they show any superior claim for crushing, without the smallest provocation, the independent State of Portugal?

King Charles of Spain was a man too upright to enter readily into such views of conquest, and too far-sighted not to fear the ill example to his own Colonies of successful insurrection. Though full of bitter feeling against the British, he was not as yet prepared to break with them. He directed Arthur Lee to stop short at Burgos, lest his presence at Madrid should give umbrage to the English embassy. But, at Burgos, Lee was met by the leading Minister Grimaldi; and, after several secret interviews, Grimaldi was prevailed upon to grant a small sum of money for the purchase of military stores, which were shipped to the United States from Bilbao. In like manner, the Count de Vergennes, and the other Ministers of

\* Lord Camden's Letters of July 27. and October 29. 1777. Grafton MSS. and Lord Campbell's Lives of the Chancellors, vol. v. p. 303. I find the rumour that “Lord Chatham has had a fall from his horse in a fit,” noticed by Horace Walpole, in the correspondence between him and Mason, as just published (vol. i. p. 304. ed. 1851).

† See Franklin's Works, vol. viii. p. 207. ed. 1844.

Louis the Sixteenth, were wavering between the desire and the dread of striking a great blow against England. They were not willing to take open part with insurgent America, especially while no success had crowned its arms: but they wished to give assistance so far as assistance could be given secretly. From their ports during the whole previous autumn, succours of various kinds had been sent forth. And no sooner had Franklin landed, than he was able to report that an underhand supply had been obtained from the government of two hundred brass field-pieces, thirty thousand fire-locks, and some other military stores, which were already shipping for America, and which were to be convoyed by a man-of-war.\* Shortly afterwards, the French Ministers further granted a gift or subsidy of two millions of livres in quarterly payments. They likewise contributed the means for supplying and refitting the American cruisers that came into French ports. Further still, they secretly gave license to four good officers of their own Engineers — Monsieur Du Portail especially — to accept commissions in the American army. All this while they never wearied in friendly protestations and assurances to Lord Stormont, the ambassador from England.

At this period, indeed, Lord Stormont was disposed to hold high and peremptory language both to the French Court and to the American Commissioners. When the latter wrote to him suggesting an exchange of the seamen captured by the cruisers on both sides, they only drew from his Lordship the following laconic reply: "The King's ambassador receives no application from rebels unless they come to implore his Majesty's mercy." This note was sent back to him by Franklin and Deane. "In answer to a letter," they said, "which concerns some of the most material interests of humanity, we received the inclosed indecent paper, which we return for your Lordship's more mature consideration."

While the Court of Versailles was in this manner double-dealing — eager to strike, yet fearful lest the blow should recoil — the current of feeling at Paris had from the first run strongly in favour of the insurgent Colonies.

\* Letter to the President of Congress, December 8. 1776.

For that feeling among the people more than one cause may be assigned. There was a rankling recollection of their disasters during the late war, and a desire to assist in humbling the countrymen of Chatham. There was a growing sense of their own servitude—a growing love of freedom. Moreover, in so martial a nation there was, with the younger men at least, an attachment to war for its own sake. Under such influences, and without awaiting orders from the government, many officers, or men desiring to be so, had crossed the Atlantic, and engaged in the Service of the United States. So early as October, 1776, we find Washington complain to Congress of the number of French gentlemen whom, from their ignorance of the language, he was not able to employ.\* There were also several Poles, who had lately fought in the civil wars of their native country. Among them, Kosciusko, employed in America as an officer of Engineers, may be most honourably mentioned.† But these men, whether French or Poles, were, for the most part, either adventurers or exiles; none among them as yet united in himself the two-fold advantages of high rank and of affluent fortune. Such a man now first appeared in the young Marquis de La Fayette.

The Marquis de La Fayette was born in 1757, as a posthumous son, his father having fallen shortly before at the battle of Minden. His studies were slight, and soon interrupted; less, perhaps, by his entrance into the regiment of MOUSQUETAIRES NOIRS (since, as he says himself, he was only taken from school on the days of a review‡); but at the age of sixteen he was married to a daughter of the House of Noailles. This illustrious alliance, combined with his own high birth, drew him frequently to Court, a sphere by no means congenial to his temper, but

\* Writings, vol. iv. p. 146. He adds, "They seem to be genteel "sensible men."

† See on Kosciusko, a note to Washington's Writings, vol. v. p. 142. It is to be observed, however, that of the Poles, some at least were not unwilling to engage upon the other side. One of these, Count Grabowsky, an intrepid volunteer, fell in our ranks at the storm of Fort Clinton. (Stedman's History, vol. i. p. 362.)

‡ "Memoires jusqu'en 1780." Correspondance de La Fayette, vol. i. p. 6. ed. 1837.

at which he acquired much suavity and gentleness of manners. These — I have heard Prince Talleyrand observe — he constantly retained even through scenes and with associates, as at the first French Revolution, that displayed a striking contrast to them. It cannot be said, however, that the Graces so highly vaunted by Lord Chesterfield ever fell to his share, since, in several of his writings, we find him make a jest of his own awkwardness.\*

It so chanced that in the summer of 1776, La Fayette, still in his teens, and serving as a subaltern with the French army, was stationed with his regiment at Metz. It happened also that in the course of a foreign tour their Royal Highnesses of Gloucester passed a few days in that town. The principal officers entertained the Duke at dinner, when the conversation turned to the last news from Philadelphia and the new Declaration of Independence. Being at that period offended with his Court, from its neglect of the Duchess, the Duke indulged in Opposition topics, and, in some degree at least, took the part of the Americans. The details were new to La Fayette. He listened with eagerness, and prolonged the conversation by asking questions of the Royal guest. The cause of the Colonies that had risen against England seemed to him just and noble, even on the showing of one of the English princes; and before he left the table, the thought came into his head that he would go to America, and offer the Americans his services. He determined to return to Paris, and make further inquiries. His inquiries being mainly addressed to Silas Deane and other zealous friends of the insurgents, could not fail to confirm him in his first impressions. He became fired with an ardent zeal for Republican principles and the American cause. That zeal continued ever afterwards — for well-nigh sixty years — the polar star of his course. That zeal, favoured as it was by fortune, adapted to the times that came upon him, and

\* Thus, he writes from America to Madame de La Fayette; "Vous aurez espéré qu'on ne pouvait pas être également gauche sur tous les théâtres." (le 24 Août, 1781.) In his "Mémoires jusqu'en 1780" (p. 7.), he as frankly owns "la gaucherie de mes manières qui ne se plierent jamais aux graces de la Cour."



urged forward by great personal vanity, laid the foundations of his fame far more, as I conceive, than any strength of mind or talents of his own. Few men have ever been so conspicuous from afar with so little, when closely viewed, of real weight or dimension. As a General, it can scarcely be pretended that his exploits were either many or considerable. As an orator, we look in vain for any high powers of debate. As a statesman, we find only an undistinguishing eagerness to apply the Transatlantic examples and to act the part of Washington, without duly estimating either the immense superiority of Washington's character above his own, or the manifold points of difference between America and Europe.

It was said by Napoleon, at St. Helena, that "La Fayette was a man of no ability, either in civil or military life; his understanding was confined to narrow bounds; his character was full of dissimulation, and swayed by vague ideas of liberty, which, in him, were undefined and ill-digested." No doubt there is some exaggeration in these words. No doubt the late Emperor, at that period, was stirred by personal resentment at the hostile conduct of the General in 1815; yet it will perhaps be found more easy by any admirer of La Fayette to impugn the good faith of the draughtsman than the general accuracy of the portrait.\*

The fortune of La Fayette was ample, his yearly income being little short of two hundred thousand livres; and his connexions, as we have seen, were among the first at Court. Under such circumstances, Silas Deane felt the vast importance of securing him. An agreement was

\* The article LAFAYETTE, by Messieurs Boullée and Michaud, in the "Supplément à la Biographie Universelle" (vol. lxi. ed. 1841), which quotes the saying of Napoleon, gives also a curious confirmation of it from the MS. Memoirs of M. de St. Priest. It appears that a little before the French Revolution, and when M. de St. Priest had returned from his embassy at Constantinople, General La Fayette called upon him and expressed his intention to undertake, as a private individual, with a band of followers, the conquest of Egypt, or else of the Barbary States — all this without the slightest knowledge of the actual condition or means of defence of these countries! It is added: "M. de St. Priest fut si étonné, si mecontent, de son ignorance, et de ses plans ridicules, qu'il lui tourna le dos et lui 'ferma sa porte!'"

concluded between them, by the intervention of one Mr. Carmichael (for as yet La Fayette spoke no English, and Deane little French), according to the terms of which the Marquis de La Fayette was to join the American service, and to receive from Congress the rank of Major-General\* — no slight temptation to a stripling of nineteen! La Fayette was to be accompanied, or rather attended, by the Baron de Kalb and eleven other officers of lower rank, seeking service in America. He sent, in secret, an agent to Bordeaux, there to purchase and prepare a vessel for their voyage. Meanwhile he made an excursion of three weeks to London, where his kinsman, the Marquis de Noailles, was ambassador. He was presented to the King, and graciously received. He saw at the Opera General Clinton, who had come home on a winter leave of absence, and who was next to meet him on a field of battle in America. But, mindful of his own hostile designs, he deemed it proper to forbear from prying into the military forces of the kingdom, and declined an invitation to visit the naval armament at Portsmouth.

On his return to France, La Fayette bade farewell to his young wife, leaving her four months gone with child, and set out for Bordeaux. Thus far all had prospered according to his wishes. But at Bordeaux he found that his preparations had been discovered and complained of by Lord Stormont, and that a LETTRE DE CACHET for his arrest was already issued. Nevertheless he did not relinquish his design. He crossed the Spanish frontier in the disguise of a courier, found his vessel at Passages, and there embarked with his companions. Towards the middle of June he landed on the coast of Carolina; and after a few days' rest, pursued his route to Philadelphia. His reception by the Congress was not at first a warm one; but La Fayette declared that he would accept no pay, and was willing to serve as a volunteer; and under these circumstances, the Assembly fulfilled the terms of the secret agreement, and bestowed on him the rank of Major-General.

\* See the valuable and authentic "Note," or rather, Memoir, written by Mr. Jared Sparks, but derived in great part from La Fayette's own oral information, in the Appendix to Washington's Writings, vol. v. p. 445—456.

At Philadelphia La Fayette saw the American troops for the first time, and, according to his own account, was struck at their grotesque appearance—with green boughs fastened to their hats—coarse hunting-shirts instead of uniforms—and muskets, many wanting bayonets, and all of unequal make and size. But he soon learnt to think more favourably of these raw levies, when, notwithstanding all their disadvantages, he observed their conduct in the field. With regard to their commander, his early impressions never changed. It was also at Philadelphia, and at a dinner-table, comprising several members of the Congress, that La Fayette was introduced to Washington. The boy-General found himself warmly welcomed by the chief whom he had long admired. “When you come to the army,” said Washington, “I shall be pleased if you will make my quarters your home, and consider yourself as one of my family.” The invitation thus frankly tendered was no less frankly accepted. Thus did a cordial intimacy arise between them, Washington at all times treating La Fayette with fatherly kindness, and La Fayette looking up to Washington with filial regard.

La Fayette had already begun to speak a little English, and by degrees acquired more. But to the last the difficulties of the language were a main obstacle, not only to himself, but to every other foreigner who served with, or under, the United States. Thus there are still preserved some of the ill-spelled and scarce intelligible notes of Count Pulasky, during the short time that he served as General of cavalry.\* Still worse was the case of Baron Steuben, a veteran of the school of Frederick the Second, who joined the Americans a few months later than La Fayette, and who greatly aided them in the establishment of discipline. The Baron, it appears, could not teach and drill, nor even swear and curse, but by means of an interpreter! He was, therefore, most fortunate in securing as his aide-de-camp Captain Walker of New York—most fortunate, if, as his American biographer assures us, “there was not, perhaps, another officer in the army,

\* See one of these notes in Reed's *Life and Correspondence*, vol. i. p. 318.

“ unless Hamilton be excepted, who could speak French and English so as to be well understood in both.”\*

La Fayette did not always confine himself to the bounds of his own profession; sometimes, and, perhaps, not greatly to his credit, he stepped beyond them. Here is one case recorded with much satisfaction by himself. He states, that soon after his arrival in America, and while attending on Sunday the service of the Church of England, he was displeased with the clergyman, because in his sermon he had said nothing at all of politics. “ I charged him to his face,” says La Fayette, “ with preaching only about Heaven! . . . But next Sunday,” continues the keen young officer, “ I heard him again, when his loud invectives against ‘ the execrable House of Hanover,’ showed that he was ready and willing to take my good advice.”†

Even before La Fayette had landed in the Carolinas, the campaign had re-commenced in the Jerseys. General Washington had remained through the winter encamped at Morristown, at the head of most scanty forces. “ Nothing,” he wrote, “ but a good face and false appearances have enabled us hitherto to deceive the enemy respecting our strength.”‡ He therefore cautioned the Congress carefully to conceal the real numbers of their army from the public. And in his own correspondence we find him lay a similar injunction on his Generals. Thus, for example, he says to Putnam, “ You will give out your strength to be twice as great as it is.”§ This rule of doubling, this necessity to keep up false appearances—is not to be overlooked by the reader of the American State Papers at this period, who may desire to deduce from

\* Life of Baron Steuben, by Bowen, p. 23. ed. 1838, in Sparks’s Collection. Mr. Bowen adds: “ As the Baron slowly acquired our language, his eagerness and warmth of temper would frequently involve him in difficulties. On such occasions, after exhausting all the execrations he could think of in German and French, he would call upon his faithful Aid for assistance: ‘ *Venez, Walier, mon ami! Sacre de gaucherie of dese badauds; je n’en puis plus!* I can curse dem no more!’ ”

† “ *Mémoires de ma main*,” Corresp. vol. i. p. 60. ed. 1837.

‡ This letter, dated May 21. 1777, and derived from the earlier collection (vol. ii. p. 77.), is cited both by Dr. Gordon and Mr. Adolphus, but omitted by Mr. Sparks.

§ Washington to Putnam, January 5. 1777.

them the exact numbers of the killed and wounded in any conflict, or of the armies then engaged.

As the spring advanced, the Commander-in-chief received considerable reinforcements, though less than he had hoped. Since, as will presently be shown, an invasion of the United States was commencing from Lower Canada, and since, therefore, it was necessary to strengthen, in no slight degree, the American army on that side, there were, of course, proportionally fewer to join the ranks of Washington. Of men able and fit for duty he could not muster so many as 8,000. With these, however, he advanced from Morristown to Middlebrook, within ten miles of the British posts of Brunswick. There the engineers were busily employed in the construction of a portable bridge intended for the passage of the Delaware. But Sir William Howe had delayed the commencement of his operations for many weeks, on the plea that the green forage was not yet on the ground. At length, in the second week of June, he appeared in person at Brunswick, bent upon renewing the conquest of the Jerseys and the march on Philadelphia. A skirmish ensued at Quibbletown between one of the English and one of the American divisions, when the former, with Lord Cornwallis at its head, put to the rout the latter, commanded by Stirling. But Sir William did not deem it advisable to assail the American Commander-in-chief at Middlebrook, a strong, and, moreover, strongly fortified position, and he was foiled in his endeavours to draw him to a battle in the open country. Under such circumstances, Sir William suddenly changed his plans. Still viewing Philadelphia as his object, he determined to reach it by sea instead of land. He relinquished the Jerseys, withdrew his troops both from Brunswick and Amboy, and embarked them closely pressed in transports at the sultriest season of the year. Even admitting, which may well be doubted, that such a course was the better on military grounds, Howe should have remembered how far it tended to depress his moral influence—how far it would give to the reduction of Philadelphia, even if most prosperous, the appearance of surprise rather than of conquest.

The retirement of the British troops from the Jerseys,

and their embarkation at New York, were a riddle to Washington. He was in doubt to what quarter they might steer, or in what direction he should march. Still, on weighing probabilities carefully and shrewdly, he continued to make Philadelphia his principal care. At length news reached him that the British fleet had been seen off the Capes of the Delaware; upon which, without delay, he moved his troops to Germantown, himself proceeding for a few days to the seat of Congress. During this interval of suspense the spirits of the Americans were raised by a slight but well-planned enterprise in another quarter. General Prescott, who commanded the British forces in Rhode Island, had taken up his quarters at a house about five miles from Newport, and one from the water-side. In this secluded situation, and at the dead of night, he was surprised in bed by a band of forty Rhode Island volunteers, was hurried on board their boats, without allowing him time to put on his clothes, and was successfully borne away a prisoner; thus affording the Americans the means of exchanging an officer of equal rank for General Lee. With so much silence and so much skill was this enterprise conducted, that neither the British sloops of war in the bay, nor yet the General's guard, stationed only two hundred yards from the house in which he slept, were alarmed.

At the Capes of Delaware the British chiefs received exaggerated reports as to the American defences up that river, and were induced once more to change their plans. Steering to the southward, and sailing round a vast extent of country, they entered the Chesapeake, and ascended the stream to the Head of Elk. There, on the 25th of August, the troops were set on shore. In numbers they were about 14,000\*, about 8,000 more having been left behind at New York under the charge of General, now Sir Henry, Clinton. There is scarce any folly for which some arguments may not be found; but it must be owned that the conduct of Howe on this occasion seems at first sight wholly unaccountable. In the spring his troops had stood in array at Brunswick. He had now, by the circuit of many hundred miles, and the delay of many

\* Sir William Howe's Narrative, &c., p. 23. ed. 1780.



weeks brought them round to the Head of Elk. But he was certainly no nearer to his final object; for, while Brunswick is sixty miles from Philadelphia, the Head of Elk is full seventy. The intervening country, moreover, though at that period well affected to the Royal Cause, is less open than the Jerseys.

Nor yet by this wide circuit did the British General keep clear of the enemy's troops. They were now at Germantown, ready to withstand him, and increased by accessions of Militia to fourteen thousand men. The first step of Washington was to march them, but without halting, through the streets of Philadelphia, on purpose, as he says, to awe the loyal, or as he terms it, the disaffected party in that city.\* He found the Members of the Congress of better cheer, and more inclined to be steady at their posts than they had been last December; and marching onwards, he resolved to risk a battle for their protection and defence.

About midway between Pennsylvania and the Head of Elk, two forks or branches of a stream from the upper counties, uniting in a single channel, flow down to the Delaware. That stream, or as the Americans would say, that "creek," is known by the genial name of Brandywine, and the same appellation has been applied to the battle fought upon its banks. At day-break, on the 11th of September, the American army was ranged along the eastern side. Sir William Howe, before he came in sight, formed his troops in two divisions; the one, under General Knyphausen, to advance and stand firm in front: the other, under Earl Cornwallis, to pass round by the forks of the Brandywine, and take the enemy in flank. The latter march, though long and toilsome, was executed by Cornwallis ably and successfully; towards four in the afternoon, he charged the American right and rear, while at the same time, at the sound of the firing, their front was assailed by Knyphausen. Under these circumstances, the discomfiture of the Americans was complete; they retreated in great confusion and by different routes, leaving the British masters of the field. The Marquis de La Fayette, who was present at this action, the first that he

\* Writings, vol. v. p. 43.

had ever seen, while endeavouring to rally the fugitives, was severely wounded in the leg. It is stated by Washington, that he lost seven or eight pieces of artillery, but as to his loss of men, he made no precise return. By Howe it was computed at 300 killed, 600 wounded, and 400 taken. The Americans ascribed their disaster in some degree to the fault of the two Generals upon their right, namely, Sullivan and Stirling; and of these, the latter at least was, indeed, wholly deficient in military skill.\*

A few days only after the battle of the Brandywine, the Americans sustained another though slighter check. An outpost of several hundred men at Paoli, commanded by General Wayne, who had neglected the usual precautions for security, was surprised and routed by the British under General Grey. Meantime the Members of Congress had hastened to pass anew some votes, conferring special and extraordinary powers upon Washington. They felt that Philadelphia was no longer secure for their deliberations. They did not, however, on this occasion, as in December last, adjourn to Baltimore, since the British army was now interposed between them and that town. But on dispersing they agreed to meet again at Lancaster, from whence, after one day's sitting, they further removed to York, still in the Pennsylvanian province, but beyond the Susquehanna river.

Even after the battle of the Brandywine, Washington had by no means relinquished his hope of defending Philadelphia. He had drawn his main force across the Schuylkill, and was observing the principal fords, with a view to dispute the passage of the British. But he had to deal with a country of which he says himself that it was "to a man disaffected." Moreover, his soldiers were scarcely adequate to rapid movements from their want of shoes. In the same letter he states that "at least one thousand men are barefooted, and have performed the marches in that condition." † Under such circumstances the British General found himself enabled to cross one of

\* "Lord Stirling, plus brave que judicieux, —" says La Fayette (*Mémoires, &c.*, vol. i. p. 21.). Thus also the Marquis de Chastellux: "Il est brave mais sans capacité . . . il est agé et un peu lourd." (*Voyages*, vol. i. p. 102.).

† To the President of Congress, September 23. 1777.

the lower fords without opposition, and to throw himself between Washington and Philadelphia. On the morning of the 26th, the van-guard, headed by Earl Cornwallis, took peaceable possession of that city; their band of music playing as they entered "God save the King."

Thus did Philadelphia fall, so long the seat of Congress, the capital in a manner of all the insurgent Colonies, the centre and main-spring of whatever was planned or perpetrated against the dominion of England. Ten months before, when Cornwallis overran the Jerseys, its reduction might have produced a great, perhaps a decisive effect. But now the blow had been so long expected and foreseen, that it fell with smaller force. It may be said with perfect truth, that the alarm and the despondency were not nearly so great when the British took Philadelphia in September, 1777, as when they had merely approached it in December, 1776. Their opponents were now inclined to view the brighter side, to consider the compensations which the loss of Philadelphia might afford them. They began to hope that, from the large amount of force which would be necessary to maintain and defend that great city, its reduction might, beyond any other cause, arrest the further progress of the British arms. Such was the feeling of Dr. Franklin, when the news was first announced to him at Paris. "No, no," said he, "it is not General Howe that has taken Philadelphia, it is Philadelphia that has taken General Howe!"

According to American accounts, the British, on entering Philadelphia, were received most cordially by the main body of the Quakers.\* The joy, moreover, of the numerous loyalists — these loyalists so lately persecuted and down-trodden — need not be described, and could scarcely be exaggerated. Yet, notwithstanding this amount of public favour, the situation of General Howe was at first not a little critical. His enemies still holding their defences on the Delaware, intercepted the communication between him and the sea. They had constructed on an island some works and batteries, which, in honour of one of their Generals, they had named Fort Mifflin. Nearly opposite Fort Mifflin, on the eastern shore, and at

\* Dr. Gordon's History, vol. ii. p. 518.

a place called Red Bank, Fort Mercer had been built ; while at Billingsport, lower down the stream on the same side, another fort was building. In the deep navigable channel, in front both of Fort Mifflin and of Billingsport, had been sunk several ranges of chevaux-de-frise ; and a considerable number of American gallies and armed vessels was stationed along the river. On the other hand, Lord Howe, with the British fleet, had sailed back from the Chesapeake to the Delaware, and was preparing to attack these forts. General Howe, in like manner, was directing a portion of his force against them, while the main body, securing Philadelphia on the land side, was encamped at Germantown.

In this divided state of the British army, a plan was formed by Washington to fall upon it unawares, and by a sudden blow recover Philadelphia. Marching all night in several columns, his troops appeared before Germantown at sunrise of the 4th of October. On they came, charging with their bayonets fixed. The British, taken by surprise, were thrown into great disorder, which the Americans hoped to improve to a complete victory. But as it chanced, the fog was so thick—and it grew thicker from the firing—as to cause confusion and uncertainty among themselves. Several of their regiments mistook one another for British ; they were seized with panic and fled with precipitation, leaving their opponents masters of the field, and victors of the day. Besides, on such occasions, it was natural that raw levies should suffer other little accidents from which more regular troops are free. Thus, we are told of one American Colonel in this battle that, as he was riding one way and looking another, his horse ran away with him and carried him under a cyder press, where he was so much squeezed and hurt as to unfit him for further service.\*

In this battle of Germantown, the King's troops had about five hundred dead or disabled. Of the other side, Washington states, " Our loss in the late action was, in " killed, wounded, and missing, about one thousand men ; " but of the missing, many, I dare say, took advantage

\* Letter from Colonel John Howard, in the Appendix to Washington's Writings, vol. v. p. 469.

“ of the times, and deserted. . . . In a word, it was a “ bloody day. Would to Heaven I could add that it had “ been a more fortunate one for us.” \* Yet defeat though it was, this battle brought no discredit, but the contrary, to the American troops, and the American commander. It showed that neither their spirit, nor their strength, had been broken by the reverses they had sustained. It displayed them not merely willing to stand firm behind entrenchments or stone walls, but prompt and eager in the open field, engaging of their own accord, not as at Trenton, and at Princeton, against scattered divisions, but against the main body of their adversaries. It proved them to want only that discipline and self-confidence which longer warfare was certain to produce. When, a few months afterwards, the American Commissioners, at Paris, were discussing a Treaty of Alliance with the Count de Vergennes: “ Your troops,” said the latter, “ have behaved well on several occasions; but “ nothing has struck me so much as that General Washington should have attacked, and given battle to General Howe; to bring an army raised within a year to “ this, promises every thing.” †

After the battle of Germantown, Washington retired with his army to Whitemarsh, a strong position, fourteen miles from Philadelphia. The two Howes, Admiral and General, were thus left free to pursue their designs against the Delaware Forts. The first attack, on Redbank, by the Hessians, was unsuccessful, one or two hundred of the assailants having fallen, and their commander, Count Donop, being taken prisoner.‡ He was mortally wounded, and expired in the Fort a few days afterwards, carefully tended by another gallant European

\* Letter to John Augustine Washington, October 18. 1777.

† Life of Washington by Sparks p. 259.

‡ The precise loss of the Hessians in this attack, as reported by the American officer at Redbank, to General Washington, was of eight officers and near seventy privates killed, and of four officers and above seventy wounded and prisoners. (Oct. 23. 1777.) But Washington, on repeating this intelligence two days afterwards, magnifies the total to 400. (Writings, vol. v. pp. 112. 115.) Another instance of the *rule of doubling*, as laid down explicitly in his letter to Putnam.

in the opposite ranks, Duplessis de Mauduit, a French officer of Engineers. The last words of Donop to De Mauduit might well sink deep into the minds of the petty Princes of Hesse, those sellers of their subjects' blood. "My career ends early," said the German; "I shall die the victim to my own ambition, and to the avarice of my Sovereign!"

In the attack of the Delaware defences the British fleet did not at first thrive any better than the British army. Two large ships, the *Augusta* and the *Merlin*, ran aground; next morning, the former took fire, and blew up with some of her crew; and all attempts to float the latter failing, she was abandoned, and burned also. Several weeks, the last and best of the campaign, were employed in further preparations. At last the position of the Americans in Fort Mifflin being turned, and a heavy fire being opened upon it, they were compelled to retire; and on the approach of Earl Cornwallis, they likewise relinquished Redbank. The works and entrenchments were in great part dismantled; the *chevaux-de-frise* were with much difficulty weighed; and thus, all these toils accomplished, the Delaware was opened between Philadelphia and the sea.

It so chanced, that some years afterwards, after the fortune of the war had wholly changed, several French officers, among whom was La Fayette, came to visit the scene of these achievements. The narrative of their excursion, which one of the party gives us, is remarkable as showing incidentally, and as it were unconsciously, the ill-treatment of the loyalists by the ruling powers; the spoliation of their property, (sometimes requisite, but never requited,) having grown so common and habitual that the spoilers expected nevertheless to be warmly welcomed! "As we landed at Redbank," writes the Frenchman, "our friend, De Mauduit, who led the way, proposed to us to stop at the house of a Quaker, only half a musket-shot from the ruins of the Fort. 'That man,' said De Mauduit to us, 'is something of a Tory; I felt it my duty to demolish his barn, and to cut down his fruit-trees, but he will be glad, I am sure, to see M. de La Fayette, and will give us a good reception.' We took him at his word, but never were



“ expectations more deceived. We found our Quaker  
“ seated at his fire-side, and busy in dressing some herbs.  
“ He recognised M. de Mauduit, who named to him both  
“ La Fayette and myself, but he would not condescend  
“ to lift up his eyes, nor to answer any of the discourse  
“ of our introducer,—a discourse which began with com-  
“ pliments, and ended with scoffing.”\*

Early in December, on the reduction of the Delaware defences, Howe mustered his whole army, and sallied forth towards Whitemarsh, to give battle to Washington. The American General was determined not to be drawn from his strong position, though ready to maintain it, if attacked. There were some slight skirmishes, in which, according to the American accounts, “the Maryland Militia behaved well, but the Pennsylvania Militia greatly disgraced their country, running away at the first fire from half their number.”† There were also some skilful manœuvres on the part of the British General, but these failing to bring down the enemy into the plains, Howe returned to take up his winter quarters at Philadelphia. Winter quarters, by this time, were not less essential to Washington. His troops had by degrees become reduced to the most deplorable distress. Many of the men were destitute of blankets in this rigorous season; and from their continued want of shoes their marches might be traced by the blood which their bare feet left upon the snow. The Quartermaster General’s and the Commissary General’s departments had been removed from Washington’s control; and the ruling statesmen of that day, far from heeding his complaints, or striving to supply his necessities, were rather disposed to cavil at the lack of enterprise which these very necessities produced. In his own emphatic words: “Finding that the inactivity of the army, whether for the want of provisions, clothes, or other essentials, is charged to my account, not only by the common vulgar, but by those in power, it is time to speak plain in exculpation of myself. With truth then I can declare, that no man

\* *Voyages du Marquis de Chastellux*, vol. i. p. 216. ed. 1786.

† Elias Boudinot to President Wharton, December 9. 1777, as printed in Reed’s *Memoirs*.

“in my opinion ever had his measures more impeded than I have by every department of the army.” \*

The urgent representations of Washington might be duly laid before the Congress. But the Members, at this period, were mainly engrossed by a change in their own Presidency; which had been resigned by Mr. John Hancock on the ground of ill health. As his successor, they chose Mr. Henry Laurens of South Carolina. Besides the turmoil attending this election, they were now even more than usually stirred by jealousies, cabals, and private interests; not a few of these directed against the best and truest of their patriots, their Commander-in-Chief.

Of such cabals and jealousies a fuller account shall be given in the sequel. Meanwhile let us proceed with Washington's complaints. “I am now convinced beyond a doubt, that unless there be some great and capital change this army must inevitably be reduced to one or other of these three things—starve, dissolve, or disperse in order to obtain subsistence in the best manner they can. Yesterday afternoon, receiving information that the enemy in force had left the city, with the apparent design to forage, I ordered the troops to be in readiness that I might give every opposition in my power, when behold, to my great mortification, I was not only informed but convinced, that the men were unable to stir on account of provision, and that a dangerous mutiny begun the night before, and which with great difficulty was suppressed by the spirited exertions of some officers, was still much to be apprehended for want of this article. This brought forth the only commissary in the purchasing line in this camp, and with him this melancholy and alarming truth, that he had not a single hoof of any kind to slaughter, and not more than twenty-five barrels of flour! From hence form an opinion of our situation, when I add that he could not tell when to expect any! All I could do under these circumstances was to send out a few light parties to watch and harass the enemy, whilst other parties were instantly detached different ways to collect, if possible, as much provision

\* To the President of Congress, December 23. 1777.

“as would satisfy the present pressing wants of the soldiery. But will this answer? No, sir, three or four days of bad weather would prove our destruction. What, then, is to become of the army this winter?

“And this, the great and crying evil, is not all. The soap, vinegar, and other articles allowed by Congress, we see none of, nor have we seen them, I believe, since the battle of the Brandy-wine. The first, indeed, we have now little occasion for, few men having more than one shirt, many only the moiety of one, and some none at all! And from lack of blankets numbers have been obliged, and still are, to sit up all night by fires, instead of taking comfortable rest in a natural and common way.

“We find gentlemen, without knowing whether the army was really going into winter quarters or not, for I am sure no resolution of mine would warrant the remonstrance, reprobating the measure as much as if they thought the soldiers were made of stocks and stones. . . . I can assure those gentlemen that it is a much easier, and less distressing, thing to draw remonstrances in a comfortable room, by a good fire-side, than to occupy a cold bleak hill, and sleep under frost and snow, without clothes or blankets.”\*

It was then, and then only, in his extremest need, that Washington attempted to supply the wants of his troops by a compulsory requisition. The seizures which he made were small in amount, yet sufficient, as he says, to excite the greatest alarm and uneasiness, even among his warmest friends. His letters clearly show the humane and generous reluctance with which he had recourse to such a measure, and declare that he should account it as among the heaviest of misfortunes if compelled to practise it again.†

The determination which Washington had taken with respect to winter quarters was not less honourable to his sagacious judgment than to his resolute will. There were, as we have just now seen, some civilian critics who, from their fire-sides, inveighed against the General for

\* Writings, vol. v. pp. 197—200.

† Ibid. p. 209.

going into quarters at all. On the other hand, there were many of his officers eagerly pressing that these quarters might be taken in some of the further towns, as York or Lancaster, where the comfort of the soldiers and their own might be secured. But Washington, while he deemed it impracticable and unnecessary to keep the open field throughout the winter months, was determined to remain within a short distance of his adversaries; thus, so far as possible, narrowing the sphere of their influence and lessening the reputation of their conquests. With that view, he fixed on Valley Forge, a strong position among the hills, and on the banks of the Schuylkill, only twenty miles from Philadelphia. It was then a wilderness overgrown with wood; and surely it affords no slight proof of the ascendancy of Washington over his soldiers, that he could prevail upon them, in the midst of frost and snow, to set actively to work to clear this desolate spot, and to construct as they best might rude log-huts for their shelter in the place of tents. There accordingly they encamped for many months to come. On all occasions they were cheered by the ready example of the General—not more when there were perils to encounter, than with hardships and toils to undergo.

## CHAPTER LVI.

IMPORTANT as may be deemed the transactions of this year in Pennsylvania, they are well-nigh cast into the shade by the campaign of the Northern armies. There, with less of talent, and fewer numbers, engaged on either side, a brighter laurel was gathered, a more decisive result was attained.

The design of invading the United States from the side of Canada has been already mentioned. It was an object of the highest importance to the British, and one which they had far too long delayed, to dis sever New England from the other insurgent Colonies, by carrying their posts along the Hudson, and the intermediate lakes between Crown Point and New York. With this view, there were assembled in Canada upwards of 7000 regular troops, German and English; the German under General Riedesel; the English under General Burgoyne, who held the supreme command. An excellent train of brass artillery had been provided. Several hundred Indians, of various tribes, had been persuaded to engage. From the side of New York, Sir Henry Clinton, with the regiments left behind by Howe, might, it was expected, afford a strenuous and successful co-operation.

With such forces and such hopes, Burgoyne commenced the campaign from Crown Point at the close of June. Here follow some words from his General Orders of that day: "The army embarks to-morrow, to approach the enemy. The services required of this particular expedition are critical and conspicuous. During our progress, occasions may occur in which nor difficulty, nor labour, nor life, are to be regarded. This army must not retreat!"

Ticonderoga was Burgoyne's first point. The Americans, not unprepared for an invasion from this side, had greatly strengthened the fort by new works on Mount Independence. But the troops, dispirited and ill-equipped,

and not exceeding 3,400 men, were inadequate to the defence of this position. Accordingly, no sooner was the place invested, than their General, St. Clair, called a Council of War; and the officers, agreeing in opinion, drew off the troops by night, leaving Ticonderoga to the occupation of the British. Next morning, when their retreat was discovered, they were hotly pursued; and two of their divisions being overtaken, were put to the rout, or cut to pieces, in skirmishes at Huberton and Fort Anne. The remainder made their way to General Schuyler, at Fort Edward, upon the Hudson river.

Fort Edward was now, in like manner, the aim of General Burgoyne. He rejected, as circuitous, the ordinary route by Ticonderoga and Lake George, and with his main body, pushed forward across the country from Skenesborough. Here he found himself harassed by almost every obstacle that either art or nature could supply. The Americans had felled large trees on both sides of the track, so as to fall across it with their branches mingled. The face of the country was likewise so broken with streams or swamps, that in this moderate distance, the British had no less than forty bridges to construct; one of these, a log-work over a morass, two miles in length.\* When at last, through all these impediments, Burgoyne did appear before Fort Edward, he found that the enemy had relinquished it on his approach, and fallen back towards Stillwater, lower down the Hudson. But the delays in his march had afforded them what they chiefly needed—further time to mature their preparations for defence.

At Fort Edward it was Burgoyne's first care to open the communications by Lake George, and thus, for the time, secure his supplies from Canada. He found himself unable to obtain adequate supplies around him; and his principal dependence was upon the stores of salt provisions brought from England into the St. Lawrence, and conveyed from thence across Lake Champlain. He found, also, that he must no longer reckon on the co-operation which he had hoped, on the side of the Mohawk river. Colonel St. Leger had been despatched from Canada with

\* Ramsay's History, vol. ii. p. 34.



a small body of light troops, to reduce Fort Stanwix (or Fort Schuyler, as the Americans termed it), and from thence make his way to Burgoyne; but St. Leger was baffled by the steadiness of the garrison, and compelled to retire with loss. Perhaps, however, the principal disappointment of Burgoyne lay in the ill conduct of his Indians. So early as the 11th of July we may observe him complain as follows, to the Secretary of State: "Confidentially to your Lordship, I may acknowledge that in several instances, I have found the Indians little more than a name. If, under the management of their conductors, they are indulged for interested reasons in all the caprices and humours of spoiled children, like them they grow more unreasonable and importunate upon every new favour. Were they left to themselves, enormities too horrid to think of would ensue; guilty and innocent, women and infants, would be a common prey."

It is due to Burgoyne to state, that from the first he had made most strenuous exertions, both by word and deed, to prevent any such enormities. The testimony, for example, of his aide-de-camp, Lord Petersham, when examined before the House of Commons, is clear and precise upon that point.\* But, in spite of all restraints, the cruel temper and the lawless habits of these savages would sometimes burst forth—sometimes not more fatally to their enemies than to their friends. The tragical fate of Miss Mac Rea raised one loud cry of pity and of indignation on both sides of the Atlantic. This lady, in the bloom of youth and beauty, the daughter of an American loyalist, was betrothed to an officer in the British provincial troops. Anxious for her security, the officer engaged some Indians to escort her from her home, and convey her to the British camp, where her marriage would be solemnised. As a further precaution, he promised to reward the person who should bring her safe to him, with

\* See Burgoyne's Narrative and Collection of Documents, pp. 65, 66. second ed. Charles Stanhope, Lord Petersham, succeeded as third Earl of Harrington in 1779, and survived till 1829. Let me say—what all who knew him would, I believe, most readily attest—that in his long career, and many high commands, few officers were ever more respected and beloved.

a barrel of rum. But this very precaution, as it seemed to be, was the cause of the disaster which ensued. Two of the Indians, who took charge of her, began a quarrel on the way, which of them should first present her to her bridegroom. Each was eager for the rum; each resolute that his companion should not receive it in his place. At last one of them, in sudden fury, raising his tomahawk, struck Miss Mac Rea upon the head, and laid her a corpse at his feet. General Burgoyne, at this news, displayed the utmost resentment and concern. He compelled the Indians to deliver up the murderer, and designed to put him to death. He was only induced to spare his life upon the Indians agreeing to terms, which the General thought would be more effectual than any execution, in deterring them from similar barbarities. Deterred, indeed, they were. But when they found themselves precluded from their expected delights of plundering and scalping, they began to desert, and go home. Of nearly five hundred, who at the outset joined Burgoyne, less than three score at last remained beneath his banner.

It may well be imagined, that while Burgoyne was advancing, declamations against his and the Indians' cruelty (for no distinction was admitted) were rife on the Americans' side. In the same spirit a manifesto had been issued by General Schuyler, recounting with great exaggeration the acts of violence committed last winter in the Jerseys by the British troops. By such means, and still more, perhaps, by the natural spirit of a free-born people when threatened with invasion, a resolute energy against Burgoyne was roused in the New England States. In all these the Militia was called out, and hastened to obey the call. But in a great number of cases such forms were deemed tedious, and dispensed with. Many a hardy yeoman, hearing of "the Britishers'" advance, waited for no further summons; he took down his gun from the wall, he drew forth his horse from the stable, and rode off at once to the scene of danger. The families that had no men to spare were only the more eager to send supplies. An officer of Burgoyne's army, passing through Massachusetts as a prisoner a short time afterwards, observes, that "In many poor habitations they "have parted with one of their blankets, where they had

“only two, for the use of their soldiers.”\* Thus in front of Burgoyne a large force was quickly mustered, which, by accessions from other provinces, grew at last to 13,000 men; men deficient, indeed, in discipline and order, but, as their adversaries after they had tried them owned, resolute and brave, and in one respect, namely, as skilful marksmen with the rifle, not to be surpassed.

For the command of this rising force a new appointment was sanctioned by the Congress. The gentlemen seated at their ease in the town of York wholly overlooked the deficiencies and difficulties caused in great part by their own neglect. They reprobated in the strongest terms the evacuation of Ticonderoga, and the retreat of their army down the Hudson; they could assign to it no better motive than either cowardice or treachery. Under such impressions they recalled the General Officers in the Northern department, and ordered an inquiry into their conduct. At the close of that inquiry some time afterwards, St. Clair and the other persons thus set aside were acquitted, and acknowledged to be wholly free from blame. Meanwhile the chief command in this quarter was intrusted to General Gates. The talents of that officer did not rise above mediocrity; but under him was serving Arnold,—Arnold, the bold, the skilful, and the enterprising, and, as yet, the warm and thorough enemy of England.

From Fort Edward General Burgoyne constructed a bridge of rafts across the Hudson, and sent over a division of his army, under General Frazer, to take post on the heights of Saratoga. At the same time he had in view another enterprise on the opposite side. He had learnt that the enemy were collecting large supplies at Bennington, in part of live cattle, and in part of corn. To obtain these supplies for the use of his own soldiers was in his situation an object of paramount importance. He despatched for this purpose an expedition commanded by Colonel Baum, and consisting of 200 Germans and dismounted dragoons, and a very few English, with some Indians and Canadian volunteers—in all about 500

\* Letter from Cambridge, November 25. 1777. Travels by Lieutenant Anburey, vol. ii. p. 45. ed. 1789.

men. At a later period Burgoyne was blamed, perhaps hypercritically, for not having sent English, instead of Germans, on this critical service, where success would depend so much on early and exact intelligence. As Baum marched onwards, he found himself joined by a party of American loyalists. In his Report, of which he says himself, "Pray pardon the hurry of this letter; it is "written on the head of a barrel:" he observes, "People "are flocking in hourly, but want to be armed; the "savages cannot be controlled; they ruin and take every "thing they please."\*

On drawing nigh to Bennington, Colonel Baum found that the force opposed to him was far greater than his own, the American General Stark having unexpectedly arrived at the head of the Militia from New Hampshire. Burgoyne had no sooner received the express to apprise him of this event, than he hastened to detach a second division of Germans, under Colonel Breyman, to support the first. But before this second division could reach the ground, the first was attacked by Stark. "We will "gain the victory," said he to his men, "or, Molly Stark "shall be a widow to-night!" It is acknowledged by American writers that Baum made a brave and resolute defence.† Nevertheless he was overpowered, and compelled to give way. When Baum's troops were already put to flight, the division under Breyman came up, and the conflict was renewed, but with no different result. In these two engagements the loss of the Americans was inconsiderable, while on the British side there were upwards of 200 killed, and 700 prisoners; among the latter Baum himself, who shortly afterwards died of his wounds.

The disaster at Bennington exerted a fatal influence over the rest of this campaign. To the Americans it gave new hope and self-reliance. On the other side, it disheartened more especially the loyalists of the province, open or concealed. Till now they had promised, nay begun, to join the British standards. Henceforth

\* See Appendix to General Burgoyne's Narrative, p. 71. ed. 1780.

† Life of Stark, by Mr. Edward Everett, p. 86.

they kept quiet and aloof. Moreover, at nearly the same time, Burgoyne sustained nearly an equal diminution of his numbers from another quarter, since he found it requisite to leave behind a garrison for Ticonderoga, which he had hoped that Sir Guy Carleton might afford from the force in Canada. Under such circumstances he determined to call in the detachment of General Fraser from Saratoga. The bridge of rafts had been carried away by heavy rains, and Frazer's men had to repass the Hudson as they best might by boats and canoes. Nevertheless Burgoyne had not relinquished the hope and intention of advancing. From Fort Edward to the town of Albany the distance was but fifty miles; and, once at Albany, he might be able to obtain round him adequate supplies, and patiently await the promised but tardy co-operation from New York.\* Considering, however, the Mohawk river, the enemy's camp, and the other obstacles upon his route, he resolved not to move one step forward until he had collected stores of provision in advance for thirty days; and in bringing up these stores nearly a whole month was employed, — a month of delay, perhaps necessary to himself, but certainly advantageous to his enemies.

In his letters to the Secretary of State, General Burgoyne was far from concealing his embarrassments. Thus he writes: "The prospect of the campaign is much less prosperous than when I wrote last. Wherever the King's forces point, Militia to the amount of three or four thousand assemble in twenty-four hours; they bring with them their subsistence, and, the alarm over, they return to their farms. The Hampshire Grants, in particular, a country unpeopled, and almost unknown during the last war, now abounds in the most active and most rebellious race of the Continent, and hangs like a gathering storm upon my left. In all parts the industry and management in driving cattle, and removing

\* "It was generally believed, and I believe it myself firmly, that if the army had got to Albany, we should have found a number of loyal subjects that would have joined and done every thing in their power to have established the army at that place." (Evidence of Captain Money, before the House of Commons, May 27. 1779.)

"corn, are indefatigable and certain; and it becomes  
"impracticable to move without portable magazines.  
"Another most embarrassing circumstance is the want  
"of communication with Sir William Howe; of the  
"messengers I have sent, I know of two being hanged,  
"and am ignorant whether any of the rest arrived. . . .  
"No operation, my Lord, has yet been undertaken in my  
"favour."\*

At length, his thirty days' stores completed, General Burgoyne, risking, or, to speak more truly, resigning, his communications with Canada, crossed the Hudson with his whole remaining army to and beyond Saratoga. The Americans, under Gates, were ranged in front of Stillwater, and lining a low range of hills known by the name of Belmus's Heights; this encampment had been planned by Kosciusko.† On the 19th of September Burgoyne marched up to assail them, but found them advance to meet him. Gates himself thought fit to remain in the rear; and the brunt of the action was borne almost wholly by the division of Arnold. After four well-contested hours, the British, at sunset, remained masters of the ground; but except the honours of the day, derived no advantage from their hard-won victory. The Americans had retired to their lines, of which the strength was vouched for to Burgoyne by their prisoners and deserters; and the late conflict had shown, beyond dispute, that in numbers they were greatly superior. Under these circumstances, though the British, on the morning of the 20th, took up ground nearer to the enemy than they had held before, they did not for some time venture on any fresh onset. Moreover, on the second day after the action, the General received a letter in cypher from Sir Henry Clinton, stating his intention to attack the Highlands about that very time. "And," adds Burgoyne, in his narrative, "I was hourly  
"in expectation—I thought a justly founded one—of  
"that measure operating to dislodge Mr. Gates entirely  
"or to oblige him to detach a large portion of his force.

\* Private Letter to Lord George Germaine, August 20. 1777.

† Note to Washington's Writings, vol. v. p. 142. Washington, at this period, was not personally acquainted with Kosciusko, but mentions him from report, as "a gentleman of science and merit."



“ Either of these cases would probably have opened my way to Albany.”

Reasoning thus, Burgoyne remained in the same post for some time longer, fortifying his own camp, and watching the enemy, whose numbers he observed daily to increase. He put his troops on diminished rations, a measure to which they submitted with the utmost cheerfulness; but even thus the General considered, with just alarm, the gradual consumption of his stores. Meanwhile one of his officers writes as follows to a friend:— “ Our present situation is far from being an inactive one, the armies being so near, that not a night passes but there is firing and continual attacks upon the advanced picquets . . . . Within these few evenings, exclusive of other alarms, we have been under arms most of the night, as there has been a great noise, like the howling of dogs upon the right of our encampment; it was imagined the enemy set it up to deceive us while they were meditating some attack. The next night the noise was much greater, when a detachment of Canadians and Provincials was sent out to reconnoitre; and it proved to have arisen from large droves of wolves that came after the dead bodies; they were similar to a pack of hounds, for one setting up a cry, they all joined; and when one approached a corpse, their noise was hideous till they had scratched it up.”\*

On the day after the date of this letter, namely, on the 7th of October, no intelligence having been received of the expected co-operation, and little time remaining to spare, Burgoyne determined to make a movement to the enemy's left, with about fifteen hundred of his men, his object being to examine the best place for forcing a way through, and meanwhile to cover a forage. The troops were on their march accordingly when they found themselves anticipated by the enemy, who sallied forth in large numbers to assail them. Thus did Behmus's Heights

\* Letter, October 6. 1777. Travels by Lieutenant Anburey, vol. i. pp. 431—433. Of the period between September 19. and October 7. Burgoyne himself declares: “ I do not believe either officer or soldier ever slept, during that interval, without his clothes.” (Review of the Evidence, &c., p. 166.)

become the scene of a second conflict. From this, as from the former, General Gates remained entirely aloof; on both days keeping close to his encampment. There also was Arnold—certainly not from inclination, but because a quarrel had arisen several days before between himself and Gates, who, in jealousy it would seem, had deprived him of his command.

For some time, though chafing, Arnold remained within the camp. But as he heard the firing grow louder and louder his impatience became uncontrollable; and, at length, without instructions or permission, he rode off at full gallop to the field of battle. This being told to Gates, he sent an aide-de-camp after him with orders to return. As soon as Arnold saw the other officer behind him, he guessed the purport of the message; he put spurs to his horse and quickened his speed, while the aide-de-camp pursued in vain, keeping up the chase for half an hour without ever being able to approach within speaking distance. Arnold rode about the field in every direction, seeking the hottest parts of the action, and wherever he went issuing his orders; and being the highest officer in rank that appeared upon the ground, his orders were obeyed. "It is a curious fact," adds his biographer, "that 'an officer who really had no command in the army, was 'the leader in one of the most spirited and important 'battles of the Revolution.'\*" Owing, in no slight degree, to his presence and exertions—charging, as he did more than once, sword in hand—the design of the British was foiled; they retreated hard pressed, but in good order, leaving behind six pieces of artillery, and with one of their most respected chiefs, General Fraser, mortally wounded. He told his friends that he had seen the man who shot him—it was a rifleman, posted high upon a tree. In both the actions of Behmus's Heights, many of the American marksmen had been stationed in this manner, and had singled out no small number of the British officers.

Not satisfied with the success already gained, and impatient of delay, Arnold forthwith gave orders to storm the British lines. Assailed they were accordingly on several sides and with great fury, the enemy rushing

\* Sparks's Life of Arnold, p. 118.

forward under a severe fire of grape-shot and small arms. Arnold, still on horseback, led the van boldly, forcing his way into the works ; but was shot through the leg, and disabled for many months to come. Another American officer, General Lincoln, was almost equally conspicuous for bravery. At last, however, the assailants in this quarter, held as it was by the native British, were repulsed. But they proved more successful on another point, namely, the entrenchment of the German reserve commanded by Colonel Breyman ; here the commander was killed, and the entrenchment carried ; and thus at the close of the day the Americans had not only won the victory, but gained an opening on the British right and rear.

Under these disadvantages, the British during the night quitted their encampment, and took post on some neighbouring heights. There they continued the whole day of the 8th, offering battle to the enemy. But the enemy were intent upon a wiser scheme ; they were already marching to turn the British right. When apprised of this design, in the afternoon, Burgoyne saw no remedy besides a retreat to Saratoga. His troops began to move that very night at nine o'clock. They were compelled to leave behind their hospital with their sick and wounded, whom Burgoyne could only commend, by letter, to the humanity of Gates. On the other hand, with the view to another action in the plains, he was determined not to relinquish his field artillery, but found the utmost delay in dragging it along, having lost the greater part of his draught horses, and heavy rains having now begun to fall. There were, likewise, constant difficulties in guarding the boats upon the Hudson, in which all the stores of provision were contained. With these drawbacks, although the distance was not full ten miles, the army did not reach Saratoga until the night of the 9th. "Such," says Burgoyne, "was their state of fatigue, that the men, " for the most part, had not strength or inclination to cut " wood and make fires, but rather sought sleep in their " wet clothes, upon the wet ground, under the continuing " rain."\* Nor was it until after daylight of the 10th

\* Review of the Evidence, &c., p. 174.

that the artillery and the last of the troops could pass the fords of the Fishkill.

Saratoga, or as in the earlier maps I have seen it spelled Sarahtoga, a village which has given its name to the disaster that ensued, derived that name from two Indian words signifying "the side of the hill."\* On reaching this place, Burgoyne found himself nearly on all sides surrounded. One division of the enemy had pushed beyond him to occupy the fords and other strong positions leading to and beyond Fort Edward. Another division had crossed the Hudson, and, from the opposite bank, commenced a cannonade. Under this cannonade it was found impossible to maintain the British boats upon the river, or to secure the provisions unless by landing them on the western shore. Other hostile bayonets were bristling on the hills round Saratoga. No tidings of Clinton had yet arrived; and the stores of provision, even though on short allowance, were every hour dwindling. The horror of these dismal prospects now rose full upon Burgoyne, and every possible chance of extrication was conned over in his anxious and accomplished mind. That the men should cast aside all their impediments, leave behind all their artillery, and commence by night their march to Fort Edward, with only a few days' food upon their backs, was a scheme fraught with hazards; yet seriously considered, and, at one moment, on consultation with his Generals, adopted. Indeed, a party under Colonel Sutherland had been already despatched in that direction to repair the bridges and the roads, but had been recalled to Saratoga, in the expectation of another battle. Nor was the opposite chance forgotten—that the enemy, in their eagerness to inclose Burgoyne, might perhaps so far reduce their force on the side of Behmus's Heights as to enable him to resume his first design, and make a push for Albany. Of this, however, no reasonable hope appeared.

With the army, at this trying time, were some few ladies—amongst others, the wife of the German General, Riedesel, and her three young children. Many years afterwards, she published an interesting narrative of all

\* Buckingham's *America*, vol. ii. p. 428

that she had suffered and seen. Together with the disabled officers, she had sought shelter in a house near the Hudson; but the Americans, believing that the English Generals had there fixed their post, directed a cannonade against that house from the opposite side of the stream. "Alas," says Madame de Riedesel, "there were none but wounded and women!" Yet, as the same lady has occasion to relate, the hostile troops were by no means wanting in kindness and compassion to the gentler sex. The sufferers had crept, for safety, to the vaulted cellars of the cannonaded house. Here one of their chief miseries was, want of water; since any man who ventured to the stream to fetch them any, became a mark for the unerring rifles of the enemy. At length a poor soldier's wife was found to undertake the dangerous service; courageously and repeatedly did she walk down with her pitcher to the bank; and, in consideration of her sex, was always spared by the Americans.

To another courageous woman, of far higher rank, an equal courtesy was shown. Major Acland, an English officer, had been, in the last action, wounded and taken. His young wife, Lady Harriet, a daughter of the Earl of Ilchester, had accompanied him throughout the campaign. Hearing of his wound, and fearing for his life, and careless of herself, though in want of food, and drenched with rains for twelve hours together, she resolved, at all hazards, and uncertain into whose hands she might first fall, to deliver herself up to the enemy, and entreat permission to share in his captivity. Thus writes General Burgoyne; "The assistance I was enabled to give, was small indeed; I had not even a cup of wine to offer her; but I was told she had found from some kind and fortunate hand, a little rum and dirty water. All I could furnish to her was, an open boat, and a few lines written upon dirty wet paper to General Gates, recommending her to his protection." In the open boat with Lady Harriet, and with a flag of truce, embarked as her escort, the chaplain, Mr. Brudenell, and two or three persons more. It was dark ere the rowers could reach the enemy's outposts on the Hudson. The American sentinel, threatening to fire, refused to let them either pass or come to shore. All that night, which proved

wild and stormy, Lady Harriet sat exposed to the inclement skies, and to her own anxious thoughts. Next morning, however, General Gates was no sooner apprised of her approach, than he received her with every possible token of compassion and respect. "Let such," adds Burgoyne, "as are affected by these circumstances of alarm, hardship and danger, recollect that the subject of them was a woman; of the most tender and delicate frame; of the gentlest manners; accustomed to all the soft elegancies and refined enjoyments that attend high fortune; and far advanced in a state in which the tender cares, always due to her sex, become indispensably necessary. Her mind alone was formed for such trials."\*

Meanwhile the fate of the entire army was drawing to an issue. Sorely perplexed, yet still preserving a manly firmness, Burgoyne on the 13th called a Council of War, to which were summoned not only as heretofore the Generals, but all the field officers and the Captains commanding corps. They were already in such evil plight that no spot in their whole position could be found for holding that Council, which was not exposed to cannon or rifle-shot—a significant fact afterwards alleged by Burgoyne in his defence, and confirmed by the testimony of his officers.† By this time, his force was reduced to 3,500 men, of whom not quite 2,000 were British. His stores of provisions might suffice for six days more. Nevertheless the General, after stating to the assembled officers the difficulties of his situation, assured them that nothing could induce him to propose terms to the enemy, except their full concurrence, and that he was ready to take the lead in any measure they should think for the honour of the British arms. The Council was unanimous for treating, provided honourable terms could be obtained. Next day, accordingly, a flag of truce was despatched to the enemy's head-quarters, with a message from Burgoyne. That flag of truce was borne by Mr. George Williams, a young gentleman from Newfoundland, one of

\* Review of the Evidence, &c., p. 174. Madame de Riedesel calls Lady Harriet *eine aller-liebste Frau*, but her husband *ein roher Mensch*. Their descendant is the present Earl of Carnarvon.

† Evidence of Lord Balcarras, May 27. 1779.



the few who had escorted Lady Harriet to the enemy's lines. In after years he became a Colonel in the army, and the first Member of Parliament for Ashton-under-Lyne, and he survived until December 1850—the very last, in all probability, of Burgoyne's expedition.

The reception of the message, sent with Mr. Williams, gave little hope. Gates's answer was, that "General Burgoyne's army, being exceedingly reduced, their provisions exhausted, their military horses, tents, and baggage taken or destroyed, their retreat cut off, and their camp invested, they can only be allowed to surrender prisoners of war." He therefore required that they should lay down their arms within their lines. When this answer came to be reported to the British Council of War, the officers present resolved unanimously to reject such ignominious terms. They all agreed in the following rejoinder, which Burgoyne proposed to send: "This article is inadmissible in any extremity. Sooner than this army will consent to ground their arms in their encampment, they will rush on the enemy, determined to take no quarter."

This rejoinder being brought to General Gates, that officer was found willing to recede from his first pretensions. He rightly judged it unwise to drive to utter despair even a far inferior number of brave and disciplined troops. He felt that the capitulation of such troops on almost any terms, and under almost any circumstances, would be a most solid advantage, and would shed on the arms of the United States a lustre which as yet they had never known. Judging from the event, I am justified in saying, that another motive also may perhaps have weighed with some, at least, of the Americans. It matters little what terms are granted, if it be not intended to fulfil them!

In this conciliatory temper on the victorious side, the terms were no longer hard to be adjusted. New proposals had been transmitted by Burgoyne, unanimously concurred in by his Council; and every one of these proposals was complied with. It was agreed: That the army should march out of the camp with all the honours of war, to an appointed place at the river-side, where, at the word of command from their own officers, their arms

were to be piled ; That a free passage to Great Britain should be granted them on condition of their not serving again in North America during the present contest ; That the port of Boston should admit the transports for that purpose, at any time desired by General Howe ; That, meanwhile, during their march to Massachusetts or their stay in quarters, provisions should be supplied for their use ; That the officers should not be separated from the men ; That roll-calling, and other duties of regularity, should not be hindered. The officers were to be admitted on parole, and allowed to wear their side-arms. No baggage was to be searched or molested ; General Burgoyne pledging his honour that it contained no public stores. All persons, of whatever country, appertaining to or following the camp, were to be fully comprehended in these terms ; the Canadians to be sent back to Canada, bound by the same condition as the British, not to serve again in North America during the present contest. There was another point on which Burgoyne laid great stress, and with which Gates felt no difficulty in complying—that the treaty between them, when concluded and signed, should bear the name not of a “Capitulation,” but of a “Convention.” In this wish, Burgoyne was prompted by his recollection of the Convention of Closter-Seven, which His Royal Highness of Cumberland, and the officers of his school, had always maintained to be wholly free from the shame of a surrender.

Thus far then was the negotiation advanced ; certain proposals had been put forth by the British, and agreed to by the American General, but no formal treaty had as yet been concluded or exchanged. In that position the aspect of affairs was in some measure altered by tidings which Burgoyne received from a spy in the night of the 15th. These tidings were to the effect that the long expected co-operation from Sir Henry Clinton had at length commenced. For the delay which had occurred in it, no blame whatever attaches to Sir Henry. His superior officer, Sir William Howe, with whom personally he was not on cordial terms, had left him but a moderate force, and at the same time the strictest injunctions against endangering his possession of New York. It was therefore necessary for Clinton to await a reinforcement of 1,700

men which had been promised him from England, but which, according to the usual mismanagement of our military affairs at home (for usual at that period I may truly term it), had been delayed until near the close of the campaign. No sooner had this indispensable force arrived, than Clinton with great spirit pushed up the Hudson at the head of 3,000 men. In that quarter there was Putnam with a numerous but disorderly Militia to oppose him.\* The first object of Sir Henry was to reduce two contiguous forts, Montgomery and Clinton †, which had been raised by the enemy on the west bank of the Hudson, and which obstructed the passage of the river. These forts, accordingly, he took by storm on the 6th of October, not without a brave resistance and a heavy loss. Another American strong-hold, Fort Constitution, and some American galleys, were destroyed by the Americans themselves. A British detachment, under General Vaughan, was then embarked, and directed to ascend the Hudson. Landing at *Æsopus* Creek, General Vaughan reduced the batteries, and burned to ashes the small town near that place; then, pursuing his expedition, he had come within forty miles of Albany, when the ill news from Saratoga decided his return. So important was this diversion of Clinton, that could it have taken place only one week or ten days sooner,—could the tidings of it have reached Burgoyne at any time, he says, between the two actions on *Behmus's* Heights,—it was the deliberate opinion of that officer, formed after the event, that he would have been enabled to make his way to Albany, and that final success would therefore have attended his campaign. ‡

When in the night of the 15th, the intelligence of Clinton's progress in the Highlands did actually reach Burgoyne, it was conjoined with the report that a considerable force had already on that account been detached

\* By the 16th of October. Putnam could muster 6,000 troops. See his Letter of that date to General Washington. Note to Washington's Writings, vol. v. p. 104.

† Fort Clinton was so called from a General of that name in the American ranks. It is strange enough that they had also another General Howe. (Life of Reed, vol. ii. p. 117, &c.)

‡ Narrative by General Burgoyne, p. 25.

from Gates's army. Early next morning Burgoyne sent another message to Gates, requiring to learn whether there was any just foundation for the last tidings, which, he added, would be, if true, "subversive of the principles "on which the treaty originated, namely, a great superiority of numbers in General Gates's army." The American General replied by a solemn declaration, upon his honour, that no detachment at all had been made from his army during the negotiation of the treaty. Under such circumstances, and on the same morning, Burgoyne convened for the last time his Council of War, and laid before it a question, as follows:—Is the treaty in its present situation binding on this army, and is the General's honour engaged for the signing it? On this point the assembled officers ceased to be unanimous. Several of the greatest weight among them, as General Phillips and Lord Balcarras, thought that in any war a negotiation might be a justifiable stratagem in order to gain time; that the public faith was in no degree engaged until a treaty was actually signed and exchanged; that, therefore, General Burgoyne was at full liberty to break off this in its preliminary stage. This view of the subject was the one that General Burgoyne himself explicitly maintained. But on the other hand, a majority of the Council declared that in their opinion the public faith was already pledged; and to their opinion thus expressed the General-in-Chief at last gave way. That the British officers in this Convention should be thus nice and scrupulous on any question in which the national honour was concerned, is a circumstance which surely not a little aggravates the shame of any violation of that treaty from the other side.

It was added, however, by General Burgoyne upon the Minutes of this Council: "The Lieutenant-General's opinion being clear that he is not bound by what has passed, he would not execute the treaty upon the sole consideration of the point of honour, notwithstanding the respectable majority against him." But he was also, as he states, swayed by the reflection that the news of Clinton's advance was not official, but only hearsay; that admirably as the spirit of the British soldiers had been hitherto sustained, the idea of a Convention had

now gone forth amongst them; that the struggles for their extrication must be not only daring, but even desperate; that with their scanty supplies of provision, a defeat would be fatal to the army, and a victory not save it.

The Convention, according to the terms already specified, and in the words agreed to by the Council of War, was next day, on the 17th of October, signed, exchanged, and executed. The British soldiers laid down their arms at the appointed spot, near the river where the old ford lay; they received from American commissaries their supplies of fresh provision; and they commenced in mournful silence their march to Massachusetts. General Gates, far from any marks of arrogance, such as perhaps his first demands had implied, showed them the utmost courtesy and kindness. Indeed, he had by no means lost all feeling for his native country, and in a letter written only a few days afterwards to a friend in London, mentions himself as one "who glories in the name of an Englishman."\* He kept his soldiers close within their lines, thus avoiding the risk of altercations, and not allowing them to witness in the piling of the British arms the abasement of a gallant enemy. One English officer present declares that when he and his comrades, after piling their arms, passed the American army, they could not observe through the whole of it one gesture nor one word of disrespect, nor even a taunting look; "all," says he, "was mute astonishment and pity."† Gates accosted General Burgoyne with kindly warmth, using terms of welcome, not perhaps well chosen, but most certainly well-meant‡; and that same evening he entertained him at his table with the principal officers of both armies. The repast was more cordial and cheerful than might have been supposed, the

\* To the Earl of Thanet, October 26. 1777. This letter was read in the House of Lords by the Marquis of Rockingham. See *Parl. Hist.*, vol. xix. p. 731.

† Lieutenant Anburey's *Travels in North America*, vol. ii. p. 3.

‡ Gates used the common phrase of greeting to a stranger: "I am very happy to see you," and Burgoyne, applying this to his own situation, answered, "I believe it; the fortune of war is entirely yours." (*Voyages du Marquis de Chastellux*, vol. i. p. 361.)

victors seeming for the time to forget their triumph, and the vanquished their humiliation,

The conduct on this occasion of another American officer is so highly to his honour that it should not be passed over in silence. General Schuyler, although removed from his command by Congress, had come back as a volunteer to Gates's army. He was one of the largest proprietors in this district, having houses both at Saratoga and at Albany; and his house near the former place was connected with saw-mills, and store-rooms, and other buildings, to the value of nearly 10,000*l*. It so chanced, that when General Burgoyne had retreated to Saratoga, and was expecting a battle, he had thought it needful for the security of his position to burn these buildings to the ground. Let the sequel be related in General Burgoyne's own words: — "After the Convention was signed, one of the first persons I saw was General Schuyler. I expressed to him my regret at the event which had happened, and the reasons which had occasioned it. He desired me to think no more of it, saying, that the occasion justified it, according to the principles and rules of war, and that he should have done the same upon the same occasion, or words to that effect. He did more; he sent an aide-de-camp to conduct me to Albany, in order, as he expressed it, to procure me better quarters than a stranger might be able to find. This gentleman conducted me to a very elegant house, and to my great surprise, presented me to Mrs. Schuyler, and her family; and in this General's house I remained during my whole stay at Albany, with a table of more than twenty covers for me and my friends, and every other possible demonstration of hospitality." \*

It was from Albany, and on the 20th of October, that Burgoyne addressed to Lord George Germaine his de-

\* Speech of General Burgoyne in the House of Commons, on Mr. Vyner's Motion, May 26. 1778. The Marquis de Chastellux, who visited General Schuyler in 1780, draws a most pleasing picture of his family circle. He adds, however: "*Le Général Schuyler est encore plus aimable quand il n'est pas avec sa femme, en quoi il ressemble à beaucoup de maris Européens !*" (*Voyages*, vol. i. p. 345.)



spatch, announcing the disastrous close of his campaign. That despatch he sent home by his aide-de-camp, Lord Petersham; the first opportunity of communication open to him since the beginning of September. At the time of his capitulation, his fighting men, as already stated, had become reduced to 3,500; yet so great was still the crowd of Canadians, of boatmen, of artificers, and of other camp-followers, that, according to the American statement, the total number of persons included in the treaty, amounted to 5,752. On the other hand, the British officers during their captivity obtained a copy of the official return of Gates's army, as it stood on the 16th of October; a return signed by Gates himself. That return gives the number, "Present, fit for Duty" as no less than 13,216. Besides these, there are "Sick Present" 622; "Sick Absent" 731; and "On Command" 3,875; these last being in fact, for the most part, the detachments interposed between the British and Ticonderoga, to cut off their retreat.\*

Such then was the capitulation of Saratoga, — the turning point of the War of Revolution in America, as sixty-seven years before, the capitulation of Brihuega had been the turning point of the War of Succession in Spain. In both, it must, I think, be felt and owned that strong reasons were assigned by the capitulating Generals why hard-pressed, and surrounded as they were, no remedy, besides that extreme course, remained. In both, the bravery and spirit were not denied, either of the troops, or the commanders. In both, their military skill was, on other occasions at least, allowed. In both, the objections to their conduct, which at first sight may appear, will be found in a great measure to resolve themselves into the inevitable difficulties attending the want of supplies in a desolate district, and the want of intelligence amidst an unfriendly population. In the case of Stanhope, considerations such as these were almost from the

\* See this Return at full length in the Appendix to Burgoyne's Narrative, p. civ. At the close of it, and still under Gates's signature, I find: "N. B. Exclusive of the numbers in the above Return, there are the Upper Staff of the army, the *bâteau men*, the artificers, and followers of the camp."

first allowed full force. But such mighty consequences, actual and contingent, were found to follow the event at Saratoga, that the behaviour of Burgoyne has been much longer and far more severely arraigned.

It may indeed be said, that even of those great conflicts, in which hundreds of thousands have been engaged and tens of thousands have fallen, none has been more fruitful of results than this surrender of thirty-five hundred fighting men at Saratoga. It not merely changed the relations of England, and the feelings of Europe, towards these insurgent Colonies, but it has modified for all times to come the connexion between every Colony, and every parent State. To the latter it has shown the need of moderation; to the former, far beyond any other example, the power, and the possibility, of victorious resistance.

At the outset it had seemed not unreasonable to lay great stress on the far superior resources of Great Britain. I have observed, for instance, one hand-bill signed by "a Yeoman of Suffolk County," and sold at Boston, in February, 1775. In that hand-bill, the impending contest with the mother country is declared as vain and hopeless as that of the Giants waging war against Olympus.\* The contest then did commence, and not without some degree at least of the success predicted. With little skill in our first commanders, with the greatest possible defects in our system of supply and equipment, with a singular remissness in pursuing and securing advantages, we yet to some extent prevailed. In July, 1776, the Declaration of Independence removing all doubt as to the final object, gave us, in many provinces, the support of a large and loyal party. In the December following we saw the force of Washington shrunk to a scanty handful, — the Congress in full flight from Philadelphia, — the British army sovereign on the banks of the Hudson, and victorious on the banks of the Delaware. Had that one opportunity — that single lock on the head of Fortune — been more sagaciously or more resolutely grasped, at least a temporary subjugation might have probably ensued. But when the first weeks

\* American Archives, vol. i. p. 1216.

of surprise and panic were allowed to glide away, there remained in operation the two great obstacles which the wisest heads on both sides of the Atlantic had all along foreseen. In the first place there was not, and from the principles at strife in a free country there could not be, what Lord North, so early as 1770, lamented that he sought in vain; "if but," he cried, "there had been an "union of Englishmen in the cause of England!"\* There never would cease to be in Parliament a considerable party forward in denouncing and obstructing the measures of injustice by which, as they conceived, their American fellow-subjects were oppressed. Secondly, the inherent difficulty of an American campaign was such, as no degree of skill in the General, or of spirit in the troops, could always overcome. After crossing three thousand miles of sea, they would still find in many districts their course arrested by deep swamps and tangled forests, — rivers to pass of a breadth and force altogether unknown in England, — extremes both of heat and cold to which they had hitherto been strangers, — and to profit by such difficulties, the first weeks of panic once past, a race of men sprung from their own loins, and inheriting their own determination. Surely then, as in after years the case of Lord Cornwallis still more clearly proved, to complete the desired reduction of these States, there must have been, first or last, other expeditions undertaken like to that of Saratoga, other expeditions exposed to the same obstacles, and tending to the same results.

In all the actions which preceded the surrender of Saratoga, the American troops, though in part consisting of raw levies, showed themselves in a high degree intrepid, firm, and ready. To Gates, as to their General in-chief, the same amount of praise can scarcely be awarded. So far as the result depended at all on military prowess, its merit, as I conceive, belongs mainly to the subordinate commanders; a large share to Stark, and a larger still to Arnold.

Nor is this anomaly, if anomaly it can be termed, the only one connected with the Generals that may be re-

\* Cavendish Debates, vol. i. p. 486.

marked in this campaign. Of all the events in the American War, the greatest and most important, in its results, at least, was Saratoga. Of all the men in the American War, the greatest and most important, beyond all doubt or parallel, was Washington. Yet these two appear wholly unconnected. Washington had nothing whatever to do with Saratoga. This I do not here note down in disparagement, or as lessening, even in the smallest degree, the hero's most just renown, but as evincing one of those apparent contradictions — one of those deficiencies in stage effect — on which, more than on any other point, real life will be found to differ from fiction — an epic from a history.

So far, indeed, was Washington from taking any part in the events of this campaign, that they were at the time almost studiously concealed from him. As Commander-in-chief of all the American armies, he had, beyond all question, a right to expect constant reports from Gates. But Gates belonged to the faction of his ill-wishers and detractors, or, perhaps, might be regarded as the chief of them. Every one of his communications was addressed to Congress, not one to Washington. Full seventeen days after the signature of the Convention he wrote to Washington upon another subject, adding, as though it were a matter of small moment, "Congress having" "been requested immediately to transmit copies of all my" "despatches to them, I am confident your Excellency" "has long ago received all the good news from this" "quarter." Now, if even these despatches had been transmitted by Congress, which they were not, there would still have been great delay attending such transmission, from the relative positions of the Congress at York and of Washington in camp.

In another manner, also, was the unfriendly spirit of Gates displayed. Early in the campaign, though ill able to spare troops, Washington had consented to reinforce him by a corps under Colonel Morgan. After the battle of the Brandywine, and with the loss of Philadelphia in view, Washington addressed a letter to Gates, declaring his own urgent need of Morgan and his men. "I" "sent him up," writes Washington, "when I thought" "you materially wanted him; if his services can be dis-

"pensed with now, you will direct his immediate return. "You will perceive I do not mention this by way of command, but leave you to determine upon it according to your situation."\* This letter was received by Gates while the British were still encamped before him on Behmus's Heights. Quite properly, and according to the latitude allowed him, he retained the men in question until the surrender of Burgoyne. But after that surrender he seemed in no haste to part with them; he despatched them at last unwillingly and tardily, thus having kept them when they could no longer be of service to him, and when he knew that their assistance was anxiously required elsewhere.

Under these circumstances Washington evinced his usual magnanimity. He felt, he could not but feel, the slights put upon him at this period both by his superiors and by his subordinate—by the Congress and by General Gates. But he allowed no word of unworthy complaint to fall from him. To a personal friend he observed, "It is to be hoped that all will yet end well. If the cause is advanced, indifferent is it to me where or in what quarter it happens."† To Gates himself we find him write in language of manly and frank congratulation on the great event of Saratoga. He adds only these words: "At the same time I cannot but regret that a matter of such magnitude, and so interesting to our general operations, should have reached me by report only, or through the channel of letters not bearing that authenticity which the importance of it required, and which it would have received by a line under your signature stating the simple fact."‡

The generous treatment of the British troops surrendering at Saratoga did not long endure; it ceased on their reaching New England. On this point Madame de Riedesel appears an unexceptionable witness. She speaks in the warmest terms of the care and kindness which, on the day of the capitulation, she and her young

\* Writings, vol. v. p. 74. See also the note at p. 125. of that volume.

† Letter to Patrick Henry, November 13. 1777.

‡ Letter to General Gates, October 30. 1777.

children received from General Schuyler. At that time she did not know him, but could not forbear exclaiming, "You are so very good to us, that I am sure, sir, you must be yourself a husband and a father!" Similar hospitality continued to be shown her through all the State of New York. In that country, as she observes in another passage of her narrative, it would be deemed almost a crime to shut the door upon any stranger. But on entering Massachusetts the scene was wholly changed. There rancour against the Royalists seemed to have absorbed every other feeling. It is stated by Madame de Riedesel, that whenever she passed in the streets of Boston the female part of the population cast upon her angry looks, and, in sign of their disdain, spat on the ground before her. A far worse token of their rancour is recorded by the same authority. There was a Captain Fenton, of their town, who had gone to England, but had left behind his wife and daughter, the last a beautiful girl of fifteen. At the news that Captain Fenton continued faithful to the King, some women of the lower orders seized on these unhappy ladies, tore off their clothes, and tarred and feathered them, in which condition they were dragged as a show around the town!\*

With this state of popular feeling in the capital of Massachusetts, the British troops under the Convention found themselves exposed to various forms of insult or ill-usage. One American commander, Colonel Henley, was, at the instance of Burgoyne, brought to trial for his outrageous conduct, having, on two separate occasions, stabbed English soldiers with his own hand, and made himself, said Burgoyne, in his own person, party, judge, and executioner! In summing up the case, the Judge Advocate, Mr. Tudor, declared, "I am an American, warmly attached to my country, and known to be a friend to the prisoner. Yet," he adds, "it must be acknowledged that Colonel Henley acted in this affair with a degree of warmth which his best friends cannot

\* *Dienst-Reise*, pp. 192—202. ed. 1801. See also p. 238. Translated into English, this little volume has been published in America, and is highly praised by Mr. Jared Sparks. (Note to Washington's Writings, vol. vi. p. 94.)



“defend.” Nevertheless Colonel Henley was acquitted by the Court-Martial of his countrymen, and was even for a few days reinstated in his command. The English officers complained to their General, that six or seven of them were crowded together in one small room, without regard to their respective ranks, whereas the Seventh Article of the Convention said expressly, “The officers are to be quartered according to their rank.” Burgoyne, finding that he could obtain no redress upon the spot, forwarded this complaint to Gates, with a remonstrance, in which he observed, that by such treatment the public faith was broken. This expression was eagerly seized upon by Congress. They declared that much more was meant by it than met the ear. “Here,” they said, “is a deep and crafty scheme—a previous notice put in by the British General to justify his future conduct; for, beyond all doubt, he will think himself absolved from his obligation whenever released from his captivity, and go with all his troops to reinforce the army of Howe.” Burgoyne, when informed of the strange construction put, or pretended to be put, upon his words, hastened to explain their true intent and meaning, and pledged himself that his officers would join with him in signing any instrument that might be thought necessary for confirming the Convention. Nevertheless, the Congress would not recede from their first objection. Another cavil was founded on the hesitation of Burgoyne to send them, as they required, though the terms of the Convention did not, a descriptive list of the non-commissioned officers and privates belonging to his army. Perhaps, however, a still superior ingenuity was shown in their assertion that the Convention had been already violated by the captive troops. The Convention stipulated that the arms should be given up: now it appeared that certain cartouch-boxes and other accoutrements had been retained. The Resolutions which the Congress passed on this occasion assume, in the first place, that cartouch-boxes must, of course, be held included in the technical word ARMS; and, secondly, that their retention by the British troops was a breach of faith so flagrant as to justify the American Government in not fulfilling its share in the treaty. The result of all these devices was

a positive refusal to allow the embarkation of the British troops from Boston, when within a few weeks, and according to the terms of the Convention, General Howe sent transports for that purpose. Hereupon Burgoyne addressed a letter to the Congress, vindicating his own conduct, and insisting on a due execution of the terms allowed him. The Congress, on consideration of this letter, merely passed another Resolution, adhering to their first. They declared, however, that they had not refused, but only delayed the shipment; and a distinction was drawn, such as Escobar himself might have seen cause to envy, between the suspension of a treaty and its abrogation.\* Nevertheless when, shortly afterwards, Burgoyne himself, and several other of the Convention officers, asked leave to go home, either on account of their ill-health or their private affairs, that permission, involving no sacrifice to the Americans, was readily accorded them.

The precise terms in which the Congress expressed their last determination were as follows: "Resolved, therefore, that the embarkation of Lieutenant-General Burgoyne, and the troops under his command, be suspended, until a distinct and proper ratification of the Convention shall be properly notified by the Court of Great Britain to Congress." It was greatly hoped that no such ratification could or would be given, as involving an acknowledgment of the independent authority of the insurgents. Nevertheless, in the course of the ensuing year, the British Commissioners in America did offer that ratification in the most ample terms. Even then the ingenuity of Congress was by no means yet exhausted. They passed other Resolves, declining to accept the Ratification from powers which they said could only reach the case of Saratoga, "by construction and implication!" But it is not worth while to attempt any further to unravel thread by thread all this tangled web of chicanery.

\* See Dr. Ramsay's History, vol. ii. p. 57. It is plain from this that Beaumarchais did not exaggerate his satire, when he makes his *Figaro* exclaim to *Bartholo*: "Doutez vous de ma probité, Monsieur? " Vos cent écus! j'aimerais mieux vous les devoir toute ma vie que de les nier un seul instant!" (Le Barbier de Seville, acte iii. scene 5.)

It might in one sentence suffice to say, that, whilst the Convention expressly stipulated that the British troops at Saratoga should be free to embark for England, and to serve again in any part of the world but North America, those troops were, in fact, kept back during several years as prisoners of war.

Connected with these proceedings of the Congress, there is one thing not a little remarkable. General Washington, in his letters to them, or to his friends, may be observed to discuss other matters both fully and freely. To this, on the contrary, he refers as seldom as possible; then touching upon it with the utmost brevity and dryness, and, as it seems to me, distaste. When addressed upon the subject by General Howe, "I have only," says he in reply, "to inform you that this is a matter in which I have never had the least direction; it lies wholly with Congress; and the proposals you make on this head must be submitted to them."\* We may easily conceive, indeed, how a man so upright and high-minded may have felt on this transaction. It has been usual to consider the events of Saratoga as fraught only with humiliation to England, and with glory to America. Yet, should these pages chance to be perused by any man, neither a subject of the former nor yet a citizen of the latter State, I would request that man here to pause, and to ask himself the question, to which of these two great countries he would sooner, were the choice before him, on that occasion have belonged, — whether to the country whose soldiers were repulsed and overpowered, and compelled to lay down their arms, or whether to that other country, then victorious, whose statesmen deliberately and wilfully, and with their eyes open to the consequences, broke the plighted faith on which, and on which alone, that surrender was made.

Reverting to the Court of St. James's, King George opened Parliament in person, on Thursday the 20th of

\* See Washington's Writings, vol. v. pp. 212. 221. 234. Mr. Adolphus says that "Washington remonstrated with force and firmness against this national act of dishonour." (Hist. vol. iii. p. 99. ed. 1802.) But no such Remonstrance is to be found in the collection of his Works as hitherto published.

November. By that time the difficulties of Burgoyne were known; but not as yet his disaster and capitulation. There was an eager expectation of the appearance of Lord Chatham, whose health was understood to be perfectly restored. On that subject, his confidential friend, Lord Camden, had written as follows, to the Duke of Grafton: "His intention is to oppose the Address, and declare his opinion very directly against the war, and to advise the recalling of the troops, and then propose terms of accommodation, wherein he would be very liberal and indulgent, with only one reserve and exception; namely, that of subjection to the mother-country; for he never could bring himself to subscribe to the independence of America. This in general will be his line, and this he will pursue, even if he is alone."\* The Earl did accordingly appear in his place, and move an amendment, entreating and advising His Majesty to lose no time in proposing the immediate cessation of hostilities in North America, in order to open a treaty for the redress of grievances, and the restoration of peace. In his speech, he drew a most alarming picture of our military prospects. He adverted, among other points, to what he termed "the sufferings and, perhaps, total loss of the northern force;" an expression which, some time afterwards, when the news of Saratoga came, was much extolled, as a proof of his great foresight and sagacity.† "My Lords," continued Chatham, "you cannot conquer America. You may swell every expense and every effort still more extravagantly; pile and accumulate every assistance you can buy or borrow; traffic and barter with every little pitiful German prince that sells and sends his subjects to the shambles of a foreign power; but your efforts are for ever vain and impotent; — doubly so, from this mercenary aid on which you rely; for it irritates, to an incurable resentment, the minds of your enemies. To overrun them

\* Letter, October 29. 1777. Grafton MSS., and Lord Campbell's *Lives of the Chancellors*, vol. v. p. 301.

† *Parl. Hist.*, vol. xix. p. 363. It is remarkable that the same foresight was shown by Washington. On the 29th of September, we find him observe: "I think we may count upon the total ruin of Burgoyne." (*Writings*, vol. v. p. 75.)

“ with the mercenary sons of rapine and plunder ; de-  
“ voting them and their possessions to the rapacity of  
“ hireling cruelty ! If I were an American, as I am an  
“ Englishman, while a foreign troop was landed in my  
“ country, I never would lay down my arms — never —  
“ never — never !

“ But, my Lords, who is the man that in addition to  
“ these disgraces and mischiefs of our army, has dared to  
“ authorise and associate to our arms the tomahawk and  
“ scalping knife of the savage ? To call into civilised  
“ alliance the wild and inhuman savage of the woods ; to  
“ delegate to the merciless Indian the defence of disputed  
“ rights ; and to wage the horrors of his barbarous war  
“ against our brethren ? My Lords, these enormities cry  
“ aloud for redress and punishment — unless thoroughly  
“ done away, it will be a stain on the national character.

“ The independent views of America have been stated  
“ and asserted, as the foundation of this Address. My  
“ Lords, no man wishes for the due dependence of  
“ America on this country more than I do. To preserve  
“ it, and not confirm that state of independence into which  
“ your measures hitherto have driven them, is the object  
“ which we ought to unite in attaining. . . . America  
“ is in ill-humour with France, on some points that have  
“ not entirely answered her expectations ; let us wisely  
“ take advantage of every possible moment of recon-  
“ ciliation. Besides, the natural disposition of America  
“ herself still leans towards England : to the old habits  
“ of connexion and mutual interest that united both  
“ countries. This was the established sentiment of all  
“ the continent ; and still, my Lords, in the great and  
“ principal part, the sound part of America, this wise  
“ and affectionate disposition prevails ; and there is a  
“ very considerable part of America yet sound — the  
“ middle and the southern provinces. Some parts may  
“ be factious and blind to their true interests ; but if we  
“ express a wise and benevolent disposition to commu-  
“ nicate with them those immutable rights of Nature, and  
“ those Constitutional liberties to which they are equally  
“ entitled with ourselves ; by a conduct so just and  
“ humane, we shall confirm the favourable, and conci-  
“ liate the adverse.

“As to the dispositions of foreign Powers, which is asserted in the Speech from the Throne to be pacific and friendly, let us judge, my Lords, rather by their actions, and the nature of things, than by interested assertions. The uniform assistance supplied to America by France, suggests a different conclusion; the most important interests of France in aggrandising and enriching herself with what she most wants—supplies of every naval store—from America, must inspire her with different sentiments. The extraordinary preparations of the House of Bourbon by land and by sea, from Dunkirk to the Straits, equally ready and willing to overwhelm these defenceless islands, should rouse us to a sense of their real disposition, and of our own danger. Not 5000 troops in England!—hardly 3000 in Ireland! What can we oppose to the combined force of our enemies? Scarcely twenty ships of the line fully or sufficiently manned, that any Admiral’s reputation would permit him to take the command of. The river of Lisbon in the possession of our enemies! \* The seas swept by the American privateers; our Channel trade torn to pieces by them! In this complicated crisis of danger, weakness at home, and calamity abroad—unable to act in America, or acting only to be destroyed—where is the man with the forehead to promise or hope for success in such a situation, or from perseverance in the measures that have driven us to it? Who has the forehead to do so? Where is that man? I should be glad to see his face!”

In the debate which ensued, Lord Shelburne, Lord Camden, and the Duke of Grafton, spoke in favour of Lord Chatham’s amendment. The difficult task of answering him devolved upon Lords Weymouth, Suffolk, and Sandwich. The latter declared that the number of our ships fit for immediate service had been grossly underrated. “We have now,” said the First Lord of the Admiralty, “forty-two ships of the line in commission

\* This refers to the recent fall of the Marquis de Pombal, one of the first effects of which was a thorough reconciliation, and as it was feared, though it did not prove so, an entire union of councils between the Courts of Portugal and Spain. See the *Ann. Regist.* 1777, p. 182.



“in Great Britain; thirty-five of which are completely manned, and ready for sea at a minute’s warning. . . . I do not believe that France or Spain entertain any hostile disposition towards us; but, my Lords, from what I have now submitted to you, I am authorised to affirm that our navy is more than a match for that of the whole House of Bourbon.” It may be observed in passing, that the controversy as to the numbers of our ships was renewed by Lord Chatham, on another day, in the House of Lords, and by several Members upon the Navy Estimates, in the House of Commons.\*

Lord Suffolk, in his speech, undertook to defend the employment of the savages. “The Congress,” said he, “endeavoured to bring the Indians over to their side; and if we had not employed them, they would most certainly have acted against us.” This statement, which at the time was doubted or denied, has been, it must be owned, in no small degree borne out by the documents that have subsequently come to light. Even several months later, we find the Congress in treaty to engage several parties of Indians in their service.† But instead of merely alleging this fact in mitigation, and defending the course pursued as the least of two evils, Lord Suffolk took up higher ground, and went the length of declaring that we were fully justified in exerting “every means to repel the attempts of our rebellious subjects—every means that God and Nature have put into our hands!”—These last words called up Lord Chatham to reply: “My Lords, I did not intend to have encroached again upon your attention; but I cannot repress my indignation—I feel myself impelled by every duty. We are called upon, as members of this House, as men, as Christian men, to protest against such notions standing near the Throne, polluting the ear of Majesty. ‘That God and Nature have put into our hands!’ I know

\* Parl. Hist., vol. xix. pp. 450. 477, &c.

† See Washington’s Writings, vol. v. p. 273., and Appendix to vol. iii. p. 494. “Divesting them,” says Washington, “of the savage customs exercised in their wars against each other, I think they may be made of excellent use as scouts and light troops, mixed with our own parties.” But what more did the English ever design or desire?

“not what ideas that Lord may entertain of God and Nature; but I know that such abominable principles are equally abhorrent to religion and humanity. What! to attribute the sacred sanction of God and Nature to the massacres of the Indian scalping knife—to the cannibal savage, torturing, murdering, roasting, and eating—literally, my Lords, eating—the mangled victims of his barbarous battles!

“These abominable principles, and this more abominable avowal of them, demand the most decisive indignation. I call upon that Right Reverend Band, those holy ministers of the Gospel and pious pastors of our Church; I conjure them to join in the holy work, and vindicate the religion of their God; I appeal to the wisdom and the law of this Learned Bench to defend and support the justice of their country. I call upon the Bishops to interpose the unsullied sanctity of their lawn—upon the Judges to interpose the purity of their ermine, to save us from this pollution. I call upon the honour of your Lordships to reverence the dignity of your ancestors and to maintain your own; I call upon the spirit and humanity of my country to vindicate the national character; I invoke the genius of the Constitution. From the tapestry that adorns these walls the immortal ancestor of this Noble Lord (the Earl of Effingham) frowns with indignation at the disgrace of his country.\* In vain he led your victorious fleet against the boasted Armada of Spain; in vain he defended and established the honour, the liberties, the religion, the Protestant religion of this country, against the arbitrary cruelties of Popery and the Inquisition, if these more than Popish cruelties and Inquisitorial practices are let loose among us; to turn forth into our

\* This appeal to the tapestry hangings, which has been often quoted and justly admired, was not entirely original. We may trace the germ of it in Lord Chatham's own mind, at an earlier period (*Corresp.* vol. iv. p. 55.); and thirty-two years before this speech, Lord Chesterfield had made a similar allusion in reference to the war of that time. According to Horace Walpole, “he turned with a most rhetorical allusion to the tapestry, and said with a sigh, that he feared there were no historical looms at work now!” (*To G. Montagu*, July 13. 1745.)

“ settlements, among our ancient connexions, friends and relations, the merciless cannibal thirsting for the blood of man, woman, and child!—to send forth the infidel savage—against whom?—your Protestant brethren; to lay waste their country; to desolate their dwellings, and extirpate their race and name!”

From the extracts, brief and imperfect though they be, which I have given of Lord Chatham's speeches, it will be seen how little either age or sickness had been able to quench his fire. The Duke of Grafton thus speaks in his *Memoirs*:—“It would be useless to attempt to describe the brilliancy of Lord Chatham's powers as an orator on this memorable occasion, for no relation can give more than a faint idea of what he really displayed. In this debate he exceeded all that I had ever admired in his speaking.” This the Duke says more especially of Chatham's first speech; while of the splendid burst in reply—wholly unpremeditated as it must have been—his Grace declares that it “appeared to me to surpass all that we have ever heard of the celebrated orators of Greece or Rome.”\*

Notwithstanding its blaze of splendid eloquence, this reply was not deemed entirely conclusive. Earl Gower rose to express his wonder that those who had the conduct of the last war should forget the means by which it was conducted, and now condemn the measures they had formerly authorised, adding that Indians had been employed on our side during the former campaigns in Canada, that presents had been given, and treaties made with them. Up started Lord Chatham again:—“I do not forget,” he cried; “I well know they had been employed, for the necessary purpose of war as I presume, and not to be stretched far and wide for murder and massacre, and all their concomitant horrors. If the previous use of them by the French, our natural enemy, and the inevitable necessities of our army obliged us to employ them in

\* See in my Appendix an extract from the MS. *Memoirs*, headed “Lord Chatham and the Duke of Grafton, 1777.” The reports of Lord Chatham's speeches in this debate, appear far superior to most others of the same period; they were supplied by Mr. Hugh Boyd. In *Almon's Register* the whole spirit evaporates.

“military purposes to scour the country, or cover our flanks, the General who then commanded and acted from those necessities — the General who has now a seat among your Lordships — will account for them. To that General, here present, I appeal. Upon that General, I call to declare whether the administration in that war ever directed or authorised the use of the savages? whether ever a line from office had given that measure a public or official sanction?” Lord Amherst, thus called upon, could not forbear to rise, but rose with great embarrassment. He had been the General, he was still the friend, of Chatham; but, on the other hand, he now stood high in the confidence of Ministers, who shortly before had made him a peer, and who shortly afterwards made him Commander-in-chief.\* In few brief words, he said that certainly Indians had been employed during the last war in America; that they had been employed by both sides; that perhaps both sides might have been in the wrong; but that he did not impute any sanction or knowledge of their use to the administration of that day. Lord Townshend, who, on the death of Wolfe, had succeeded to his post, supplied a more ample explanation. “The case was this; M. de Montcalm employed them early in the war, which put us under the necessity of doing the same; but they were never employed in the army I commanded but to assist the troops in the laborious services necessarily attending an army; they were never under military command, nor arrayed for military purposes.” — The controversy did not end here, but was renewed in the House with no less acrimony on another day. At the request of Lord Chatham, there were supplied to him copies of his instructions to the Generals in Canada, and of their despatches bearing on this point. From these papers it appears that General Amherst had, on one occasion, been desired to keep a constant correspondence with the Indians, and endeavour “to engage them to take part and act with our forces in all

\* A few days only before this debate, we find in a letter from Mr. Lancelot Brown, who had just seen the King: “The Court sal-volatile is Lord Amherst.” (To the Countess of Chatham, November 11. 1777.)

“operations as he should judge most expedient;” but that these operations had been limited in the manner Lord Townshend described; and that at the close of the campaign Mr. Pitt had been able to express the great pleasure with which His Majesty had learnt “that through the good order kept by Sir William Johnson among the Indians, no act of cruelty has stained the lustre of the British arms.”\*

The Amendment which Lord Chatham had moved to the Address was, on a division, rejected by a large majority—97 against 28. In the Commons an Amendment in the same words was brought forward by his friend and follower, the young Marquis of Granby, seconded by Lord John Cavendish. It gave rise to a long debate, in which Burke and Fox put forth their powers; but here also a large majority—243 to 86—declared against it.

There was another incident disclosing one main defect of Lord North’s administration at this time—the want of an able and steadfast coadjutor in the Lords. On the 2nd of December the Duke of Richmond moved for certain papers. Lord Suffolk had determined to resist the motion, but finally gave way, close pressed by another burst of eloquence from Chatham. On the same day the same motion was made by Mr. Fox in the Commons. It was warmly resisted, both by the Prime Minister and the Attorney-General. The latter was still speaking against it when the news came in, and was quickly whispered from bench to bench, that the very papers in question had just been granted in the other House. A general titter ran along the ranks of Opposition. Thurlow was disconcerted for a moment, but for a moment only. With characteristic sturdiness and awful frown, he cried, “Here, then, I quit the defence of the Government. Let Ministers do as they please in this, or any other House, I, as a Member of Parliament, will never

\* See a note to the Chatham Papers, vol. iv. p. 477. It is worthy of note that on General Amherst being created a Peer in 1776, he had chosen as one of his *supporters* “on the sinister, a Canadian war-Indian, holding in his exterior hand a staff argent, thereon a human scalp, proper.” (Collins’s Peerage, vol. viii. p. 176. ed. 1812.)

“give my vote for making public the circumstances of a negotiation during its progress!” Warmed by this example, Lord North also declared that, whatever might have passed elsewhere, he should adhere to his own opinion; and under such auspices the motion was rejected by a large majority.

Such were the views, and such the numbers of the rival parties, when, in the night of the 2nd of December, there came, like a thunder-stroke, the news of Burgoyne’s surrender. It came at first as a mere unauthorised rumour, having been brought to Ticonderoga by the reports of deserters, and from Ticonderoga transmitted to Quebec. Yet even the first rumour gave rise to keen debates in both Houses. On the 3rd, Mr. Fox moved for copies of all instructions and other papers relative to the expedition from Canada. On the 5th, a similar motion in the Peers was brought forward by the Earl of Chatham, giving him occasion for another long and eloquent philippic. In both cases the Ministers might justly call upon Parliament to suspend its judgment, as they must their own, until the more authentic tidings were received.

At length, after twelve days of anxious expectation, there came by way of Canada a duplicate of Burgoyne’s despatch from Albany; later still, Lord Petersham, with the first draft, arrived from New York. Already there had fallen from Lord North some hints of conciliation with the Colonies, and he had declared that after the holidays he would move the House to consider what concessions might be proper to be made the basis of a treaty.\* Happily for the Government the usual period of the Christmas adjournment was at hand; and notwithstanding the remonstrances of Chatham in the Lords, of Burke and Fox in the Commons, it was decided that Parliament should not meet again for business until the 20th of January. This seasonable interval gave the Ministers

\* It is very remarkable that on the very day before the first news of Saratoga came, Gibbon wrote as follows to Holroyd, from the House of Commons: “There seems to be an universal desire for peace, even on the most humble conditions. Are you still fierce?” (*Miscell. Works*, vol. ii. p. 216. ed. 1814.) See also in my Appendix, Mr. Fox’s two Letters to the Duke of Grafton, of Dec. 12. and 16. 1777.



some leisure to review their difficult position, or to rally their discomfited adherents.

So far as Burgoyne's own conduct was concerned, his vindication could be placed in no hands more able than his own. When his despatch from Albany was first sent forth in print, the public did not fail to admire the grace, the good feeling, and the dignity, with which, in that able composition, he told his mournful tale. According to a popular writer of that age, "The style charmed every reader; but he had better have beaten the enemy, and misspelt every word of his despatch, for so, probably, the great Duke of Marlborough would have done, both by one and the other."\* Yet the general result of the news at home was not despondency nor even depression. On the contrary, a loyal spirit was almost every where aroused. The Highlands of Scotland and the towns of Manchester and Liverpool took the lead; for which reason they were shortly afterwards reviled most bitterly by Fox.† Large sums were freely, and without any need of persuasion, subscribed to raise new regiments; and thus, by private means, were fifteen thousand soldiers added to the forces of the State. Nor was the bounty of the people confined to this single channel; it flowed also in a nearly opposite, but not less praiseworthy, direction. From Paris Dr. Franklin had continued his correspondence with his friend, David Hartley, in London. Writing to him in October last, Franklin had cited the experience of former wars, when some act of generosity and kindness towards prisoners on one side had softened the resentment on the other, and paved the way to reconciliation. "You in England," added he, "if you wish for peace, have at present the opportunity of trying this means with regard to our prisoners now in your gaols, who complain of very severe treatment."‡ On this hint had Hartley acted. He had set on foot a charitable subscription for the relief

\* Mrs. Inchbald's Preface to "the Heiress."

† Mr. Fox said that "Scotland and Manchester were so accustomed to disgrace, that it was no wonder if they pocketed instances of dishonour, and sat down contented with infamy!" (Speech in the House of Commons, January 22. 1778.)

‡ Works, vol. viii. p. 224.

of the American prisoners in England. In this manner a sufficient sum was soon collected; chiefly, no doubt, by the party zeal of Opposition, but in great measure also, as we may justly state, by the generous spirit of the people.

At the Court of Versailles the effect of the news was speedy—nay, almost immediate. All doubt was now removed; all irresolution cast aside; and by the middle of December it was officially announced to the American Commissioners that the King of France was prepared to acknowledge the independence of the States. The French Ministers did not aim—not overtly at least—at the recovery of Canada; they had the good sense to foresee that such a pretension on their part would tend more than any other cause to rekindle the old English feeling in the breast of the Americans. Not all men, they knew, are equally flexible; not all equally ready to hail an ancient enemy as a new ally. They, therefore, from the outset, declared that if ever, as was probable, the recognition of the United States should involve their Royal Master in a war with England, he would not ask or expect any compensation for the expense or damage he might sustain on that account. The only condition which he positively required was, that the United States should not give up their independence in any future treaty, nor, under any circumstances, return to their subjection to the British Crown.

On this basis a negotiation was carried on during several weeks for treaties both of commerce and alliance; the latter treaty to be eventual in its provisions, and to take effect only in case of a rupture between France and England. The first stipulation was, that while the war continued, both parties should make it a common cause, and aid each other as good friends and allies. If the Americans should gain possession of any of the remaining British territories on the continent of North America, such territories should belong to the United States. If the French King should conquer any of the British islands in or near the Gulf of Mexico, they were to be retained by him. The contracting parties invited the accession of other Powers, and expressly agreed that neither of

them should conclude a truce or peace with Great Britain without the consent of the other first obtained.

The two treaties of Commerce and Alliance were signed at Paris upon the same day, the 6th of February, by the three Commissioners, Franklin, Deane, and Lee, on the part of America; and by M. Gérard, secretary of the King's Council, on the part of France. The latter gentleman was designed as the first French Minister to the United States, but did not embark for his destination till some weeks afterwards. During some weeks, indeed, it was endeavoured to keep the treaties secret, so as to afford further time for the desired accession of Spain—an accession which, after all, could not at this period be obtained. During some weeks were accordingly postponed the official announcement of the treaties to the Court of St. James's, and the official presentation of the Commissioners to the Court of Versailles.

## CHAPTER LVII.

WHATEVER wish might be felt by the French Ministers to conceal their late negotiation, it did not long remain a secret to the British Ambassador, nor even to the British public. Before the close of January, we find King George agreeing, in his private correspondence with Lord North, that every letter from Paris added to the probability of a speedy declaration of war. Towards the middle of February we may observe Lord North pressed with questions, in the House of Commons, whether a treaty between France and America had not been actually signed. Lord North for some time remained silent: at length he answered, that the conclusion of such a treaty was possible, nay, too probable; but that officially he was not as yet apprised of it.\*

No sooner had Parliament met again for business on the 20th of January, than the renewed vigour of Opposition was apparent. The Ministers found themselves assailed by many and various adversaries. First came a motion from Sir Philip Jennings Clerke, against raising troops by subscription without consent of Parliament. Next there was an Address to the Crown, proposed by Mr. Burke, against the employment of savages in the American war. Mr. Fox moved: "That no more of the "old corps be sent out of the kingdom." From the same indefatigable orator there proceeded also a renewal of the motion for General Burgoyne's orders and instructions; and a critical commentary on the distribution of our forces in America. All these attacks were borne by Lord North with his usual good humour, and encountered with his usual ability.

\* The King to Lord North, Jan. 31. 1778. Appendix.—Parl. Hist. vol. xix. p. 775. Gibbon, in a private letter of the 23rd of February, was able to mention nearly the exact day (the 5th instead of the 6th), on which the treaties had been signed at Paris.

There was one point, however, and that point of vital moment, on which, at this period, there was an utter disaccordance among the chiefs of Opposition. Lord Chatham, as we have seen, had declared himself strongly against allowing the independence of America; from that ground he had lately stated that he could not depart; he held it with no less firmness when the French war was impending, with no less firmness when that war had already commenced. Lord Rockingham, on the contrary, had even last Session, in the House of Lords, questioned the possibility, or therefore the prudence, of continuing to withstand the separation of our insurgent Colonies; and he was greatly confirmed in his unwillingness when he saw our ancient rival determined to engage against us. Before the close of January these two party leaders had come to a written explanation on the subject, each resolutely, though with many civil expressions of regret, adhering to his own opinion.\*

Often as of late years they had acted in concert, it seems probable that the Earl and the Marquis continued to look upon each other more as rivals than as friends. But among Rockingham's own nearest followers, there were several, and of no slight note, who hoped that the difference was seeming rather than real, and who deemed that at least a trial might be made. "Can you blame Lord Chatham," said his son-in-law, Lord Mahon, to the Duke of Richmond, — "can you blame Lord Chatham for desiring to keep the now distracted parts of the empire together, and for attempting to prevent such a disgraceful and fatal dismemberment of this country?" The Duke answered as follows: — "So far from blaming Lord Chatham for wishing to prevent this separation, I highly applaud him for it, if he has any kind of reason in the world to think that the thing can be rendered practicable by any means whatever. And so desirous am I," added the Duke, "that this may be done, that if Lord Chatham thinks it right to attempt it, and does attempt it, I will certainly be

\* Of the three letters that passed, the first does not appear to be preserved; the other two are printed in the Chatham Correspondence, vol. iv. pp. 489—493.

“ the first to give him every support in my power ; but  
“ I must go one step farther, that if Lord Chatham, after  
“ having fully and fairly attempted it, should fail in his  
“ expectations, notwithstanding all the support that I  
“ can give him, I, for my part, in order to put an end to  
“ this war, and procure peace, will be contented with  
“ getting less, if it is out of everybody’s power to get  
“ more.”\*

Throughout the country, indeed, there now began to prevail a great and growing desire that Lord Chatham might be restored to the head of affairs — to avert a war with the House of Bourbon, or to make that war triumphant as the last — and to preserve, if it yet could be preserved, the unity of the empire. Nor was that desire confined to those who had ever followed and revered him ; it was no less shared by many once forward as his opponents and gainsayers. Lord Mansfield, for example, declared to Lord Holderness, even with tears, it is said, in his eyes, that the vessel was sinking, and that Lord Chatham must be sent for. Lord Bute, from his retirement, expressed a similar opinion to Sir James Wright, one of his private friends. Sir James Wright, who appears to have been an officious busy-body, repeated Lord Bute’s saying, with great emphasis, to Dr. Addington, Lord Chatham’s physician and friend ; and Dr. Addington, understanding it as a kind of overture or scheme of coalition, conveyed it as such to Hayes. Lord Chatham dictated a few words of reply, with civil thanks for Lord Bute’s good opinion, but adding that nothing but a real change — new counsels and new counsellors — could prevent the consummation of the public ruin. When this answer was shown to Lord Bute, he observed that, from the expression, “ real change,” Lord Chatham seemed to imagine that Lord Bute had still some influence in the administration. He therefore wished Lord Chatham to be informed that ill health and family distresses had accustomed him to a perfectly retired life, to which he hoped to adhere as long as he lived ; that his long absence from all sorts of

\* Lord Mahon to the Earl of Chatham, February 11. 1778, as published in the Chatham Papers.



public business, and the many years which had intervened since he saw the King, prevented his knowing more of public affairs than he gathered from general conversation or the newspapers; that this total ignorance, notwithstanding his zeal for the country, love for the King, and very high opinion of Lord Chatham, put it out of his power to be of the least use in this dangerous emergency: but that from his heart he wished Lord Chatham every imaginable success in the restoration of the public welfare.

This transaction, which here I have much abridged, is only so far of importance that it gave rise, after Lord Chatham's death, to a keen controversy whether he or Lord Bute had sought the alliance of the other. In that war of pamphlets took part the sons of both the chiefs, Lord Mountstuart and William Pitt. Yet it seems quite clear that neither of the veteran statesmen had been in any degree to blame; and that the fault lay only in the over-zeal of the go-betweens, Sir James Wright and Dr. Addington, who could not afterwards agree in their accounts of their own gossiping interviews, and who at the time, beyond all doubt, misconstrued Lord Bute's private wishes into political overtures.\*

Strange though it may be deemed, the fact is certain, that no man at this period could feel a stronger wish to see the Prime Minister displaced, and Lord Chatham called on to succeed him, than did Lord North himself. Even before the close of January he had informed the King, in his secret correspondence, how much his own judgment and feelings pointed to a resignation. In an upright spirit, however, he had resolved first to bring forward and to carry through the conciliatory proposals which he had announced, both to vindicate his own intentions and to clear the path for his successor.

Accordingly, on the 17th of February, Lord North rose in the House of Commons to unfold his scheme. His speech, which occupied two hours, was, even by his adversaries, praised as eloquent and able. In the first

\* For an accurate summary and just judgment of this transaction, the reader may consult a critic, by no means friendly to Lord Chatham, in the *Quarterly Review*, No. cxxxi. p. 266.

place he reviewed his past career. He had never, he said, proposed any tax on the Americans; he had found them already taxed when, unfortunately, — he must still use that word, however it might be turned against him, — he had come into administration. His principle of policy had been to have as little discussion on that subject as possible, and to keep the affairs of America out of Parliament; thus he had neither proposed to repeal the tea-tax, nor yet by any especial means to enforce it. As to the Act enabling the East India Company to send teas to America on their own account, and with the drawback of the whole duty here, that was a regulation of which he had thought it not possible that the Americans could complain, since it was a relief instead of an oppression. His idea never had been to draw any considerable revenue either that way or any other from the Americans; his idea was that they should contribute in a very low proportion to the defence of our common empire. From the beginning he had been uniformly disposed to peace. The coercive Acts which he had framed were such as were called forth by the distemper of the time; and the results which they produced were such as he never designed, nor could in reason have expected. But as soon as he found that they had not the effect which he intended, he had come down to that House with a conciliatory proposition before the sword was drawn. That proposition was clear and simple in itself, but by a variety of discussions in and out of Parliament it was made to appear so obscure that it went out to America already condemned. Then ensued the war, the events of which had not answered his just hopes. The great and well-appointed force sent out, and amply provided for by Government, had hitherto produced by no means a proportionate effect. Considering all things, the events had been very contrary to his expectations. But to these events, and not to those expectations, he must make his plan conform. Still he would by no means have it thought that his present concessions were prompted by necessity. We were in a condition to carry on the war much longer. During the recess the country had most freely, of its own accord, raised more men. It might raise many more should its terms of peace be now rejected. The navy was never in greater strength;

the revenue was very little sunk, and the supplies for the current year would be raised with perfect ease. But he rather indulged the hope that the large concessions which he was now prepared to make would render needless the loyal exertions of the people, and avert any fresh appeal to arms.

The Minister then proceeded to state that there were two Bills which he had ready, and asked leave to bring in. The first was entitled "For removing all Doubts and "Apprehensions concerning Taxation by the Parliament "of Great Britain in any of the Colonies." It repealed, expressly and by name, the tea-duty in America; and as to the future it declared, "That from and after the passing "of this Act, the King and Parliament of Great Britain "will not impose any duty, tax, or assessment whatever "in any of His Majesty's (American) Colonies, except "only such duties as it may be expedient to impose for "the regulation of commerce, the net produce of such "duties to be always paid and applied to and for the "use of the Colony in which the same shall be levied." Thus was the claim of Parliamentary taxation fully, at last, renounced.

The second Bill was to enable His Majesty to appoint Commissioners with sufficient powers to treat with the insurgent Colonies. These Commissioners were to be five in number, and their powers most extensive. They were to raise no difficulties as to the rank or legal title of the leaders on the other side, but were left at liberty to treat, consult, and agree with any body or bodies politic, or any person or persons whatsoever. They might proclaim a cessation of hostilities on the part of the King's forces by sea or land, for any time, and under any conditions or restrictions. They might grant pardons and appoint Governors. They might suspend the operation of any Act of Parliament relating to America, passed since the 10th of February, 1763. The Americans, said Lord North, had desired a repeal of all the Acts after that date; but this could be taken only as a loose and general expression, since some of the Acts passed, as in 1769, were for the granting of bounties or the relaxation of imposts, and of such Acts the Americans could not be supposed to desire the repeal. Some choice and selection would,

therefore, be required. As to those other Acts, such as the Massachusetts Charter Act, which had produced or inflamed the quarrel, Lord North explicitly stated his opinion that they ought to cease. Instead, however, of repealing them here without further delay, he deemed it best to refer the whole matter to the Commissioners upon the spot, since the Americans would consider Acts already repealed as merely the basis of a treaty, and might be tempted to raise some new demands upon it. The Commissioners, said Lord North, should be instructed to negotiate for some reasonable and moderate contribution towards the common defence of the empire when reunited; still this contribution was not to be insisted on as a *SINE QUA NON*; only if the Americans should refuse it, they were not to complain if hereafter they did not receive support from that part of the empire any proportion of whose charges they had declined to bear. Upon the whole it was, not obscurely, intimated that the Commissioners might accept almost any terms of reconciliation, short of independence, and subject to confirmation by a vote of Parliament.

The impression on the House that night, while Lord North was speaking, and after he sat down, is well described by the pen of a contemporary — no other, in all probability, than Burke: “A dull melancholy silence for some time succeeded to this speech. It had been heard with profound attention, but without a single mark of approbation to any part, from any description of men, or any particular man in the House. Astonishment, dejection, and fear overclouded the whole assembly. Although the Minister had declared that the sentiments he expressed that day had been those which he always entertained, it is certain that few or none had understood him in that manner; and he had been represented to the nation at large as the person in it the most tenacious of those Parliamentary rights which he now proposed to resign, and the most remote from the submissions which he now proposed to make.”\*

It may be said, indeed, that there was not a single

\* Annual Register, 1778, p. 133. See also Gibbon's Letter to Holroyd, of February 23. 1778.

class or section of men within the walls of Parliament to which the plan of Lord North gave pleasure. The Ministerial party were confounded and abashed at finding themselves thus required to acknowledge their past errors and retrace their former steps. Some among them, as William Adam, and Morton, Chief Justice of Chester, loudly protested against the holding forth to rebels terms like these, which they said would dispirit the people and disgrace the Government. Others called out that they had been deceived and betrayed. In general, however, the majority acquiesced in sullen silence. On the other part, the Opposition were by no means gratified to see the wind, according to the common phrase, taken from their sails. They could not, indeed, offer any resistance to proposals so consonant to their own expressed opinions, but they took care to make their support as disagreeable and as damaging as possible. Fox began his speech by complimenting the Minister on his happy conversion, and congratulating his own friends on the acquisition of so powerful an ally. Above all, the continuance of the Minister in office, under such circumstances, was inveighed against with more truth than taste by several of the chiefs upon the other side. Did Lord North, it was asked, believe himself to wield the spear of Achilles, able to heal the wounds which itself had made? Could the same statesman who had provoked the war look for welcome as a peace-maker? Must not his proposals, whatever they might be, come to the Americans as from a tainted spring, — raise their jealousy as hollow and insincere, or keep alive their resentment as inadequate and worthless?

In spite of such taunts, and far from friendly feelings on all sides, the Conciliatory Bills, as they have been termed, were not in reality opposed from any quarter. There was only one division on a clause moved by Mr. Powys to repeal expressly and by name the Massachusetts Charter Act. Lord North induced a large majority to vote against that clause, but agreed that the object in view should be attained by a separate measure. A Bill for the purpose was therefore introduced by Mr. Powys, and passed through Parliament concurrently with the other two. In the House of Lords the same arguments were



with little change renewed. Lord Hillsborough, and Chatham's own brother-in-law, Lord Temple, vehemently declaimed against the Bills on the high prerogative ground, as forming a most disgraceful capitulation. The Ministers, on the other hand, received some acrimonious support from the Duke of Richmond and Lord Rockingham. Lord Shelburne took occasion to declare his full concurrence in the sentiments of Chatham, expressing "the strongest disapprobation of every idea that tended "to admit the independence of America," although acknowledging that future circumstances might create a necessity for such a submission. Lord Chatham himself was ill with gout at Hayes, and did not appear. There was no division; and on the 11th of March the King, seated on his Throne, gave to all three measures the Royal Assent.

Only two days previously Lord North, who had opened his Budget on the 6th, had carried through his financial Resolutions in the House of Commons, involving a new loan of 6,000,000*l.*, which was contracted on advantageous terms. Thus were funds provided to pursue the war, should that be requisite. Thus was an opening made for negotiations, should they be practicable. In either case the path was cleared for a new administration. Here then was the moment which Lord North had for some time past desired—the moment when most with honour to himself, and most with advantage to his country, he could fulfil his intention of resigning. Several subordinate circumstances—several lesser causes of weakness or necessities for change in his government—might tend to confirm him in his purpose. He must have felt that the events of the last month had greatly shaken and loosened his hold over his majority in Parliament. In the House of Lords he had no supporter adequate to such troubled times. It would be necessary, should his government continue, to replace Lord Chancellor Bathurst by some more eloquent orator and more energetic statesman. In the Commons he was on the point of losing his principal colleague, Lord George Germaine. That nobleman, ever prompt and able, and in the Cabinet at least courageous, but hasty and violent, had embroiled himself in quarrels with the chief officers



under his direction. Sir Guy Carleton had been provoked to write to him with expressions of so much asperity that Sir Guy was in consequence removed from the Government of Canada. Sir William Howe, at the same juncture, was not less offended. He complained that while he had pressed for larger reinforcements, while he had been led to hope for them, while he had been allowed to frame his plans in consequence, none, or next to none, had in point of fact been sent him. At last, early in the winter, he had written to Lord George as follows: — “From the little attention, my Lord, given  
“to my recommendations since the commencement of my  
“command, I am led to hope that I may be relieved from  
“this very painful service, wherein I have not the good  
“fortune to enjoy the necessary confidence and support  
“of my superiors, but which I conclude will be extended  
“to Sir Henry Clinton, my presumptive successor, or to  
“such other servant as the King may be pleased to  
“appoint. By the return, therefore, of the packet I  
“humbly request I may have His Majesty’s permission  
“to resign the command.”\* His request, perhaps on other grounds not undesirable, was soon granted, although, as was foreseen, involving probably the retirement also of his brother, Lord Howe. On the 4th of February we find Lord George write to Sir William announcing the desired permission from His Majesty, and at the same time directing him to deliver his orders and instructions to Sir Henry Clinton, as his successor. Yet, within a month of that 4th of February, Lord George, in a sally of anger, had himself resigned. The ground of his displeasure was, that the King, anxious to reward the past services of a most deserving officer, bestowed on Sir Guy Carleton the sinecure government of Charlemont, which Lord George chose to construe as an insult to himself. His retirement appears to have been agreed to and resolved upon, since we find the King, in his secret letters of this period, allude to his

\* To Lord George Germaine, October 22. 1777. MS. State Paper Office, and Note of Mr. Sparks to Washington’s Writings, vol. v. p. 160.

“defection,” and inveigh against his “malevolence of mind.” \*

These circumstances were not known to the public. But to Lord North they clearly showed that his administration at this period was already unhinged by the impending loss of that member of it next in importance to himself, as mainly charged with the conduct of the American affairs. Herein may have lain a further motive for his own retirement. But I have no doubt that the reason which weighed principally with Lord North, was the public-spirited conviction, such as his enemies had of late expressed, but such as also his own private judgment must have urged, that, considering the bitter resentment felt against him, whether rightly or wrongly, in America, any proposition of peace that he might make would be fraught with new and unnecessary obstacles, and afford a lesser chance of ultimate success. To whom then — might Lord North ask — to whom should the conduct of this negotiation, and the direction of the public councils at this crisis, be entrusted? To whom else than to that great statesman, so much venerated and beloved by the Americans, yet so resolute in his declarations against their independence?

Such was the advice which the Minister was preparing to offer to the King, when, only two days after the Royal Assent to the Conciliatory Bills, there ensued another event still further tending, as Lord North conceived, to the same conclusion. On the 13th of March, the French Ambassador in London, the Marquis de Noailles, delivered to the Secretary of State, Lord Weymouth, a Note, formally announcing the Treaty of Friendship and Commerce, as lately signed between France and the United States. That Note was couched in terms of irony, nay almost of derision. It remarked of the United States that they “are in full possession of independence, as pronounced by them on the 4th of July, 1776,” and it thus proceeded:—“In making this communication to the Court of London, the King (of France) is firmly persuaded it will find therein new proofs of His

\* To Lord North, March 3. 1778.

“ Majesty’s constant and sincere disposition for peace ;  
“ and that his Britannic Majesty, animated by the same  
“ sentiments, will equally avoid every thing that may  
“ alter their good harmony ; and that he will particularly  
“ take effectual measures to prevent the commerce be-  
“ tween His Majesty’s subjects and the United States of  
“ North America from being interrupted.”

So long as the Treaties signed at Paris had been kept concealed, there might remain a hope that they would not be acted on. But such a Declaration, at such a moment, and from such a Power, seemed, in Lord North’s opinion, to render more than ever indispensable the formation of a new and strong administration. On the very next day, the 14th of March, he addressed an important letter to the King. That letter has not been preserved, or at least not been produced ; it is only known to me by the King’s reply, which I shall now for the first time publish ; but from that paper we may deduce with certainty the purport of Lord North’s ; it was to press in urgent terms his own resignation and advise the King to send without delay for Lord Chatham.

The King’s reply was not many hours delayed. He declared that on a matter which had for many months engrossed his thoughts he could have no difficulty in answering the letter instantly. He went on to refer with great bitterness to what he termed “ Lord Chatham and “ his crew,”—great bitterness, but certainly not without great provocation. Let it only be remembered how uniformly frank and kind, how gracious and generous, had been the King’s whole conduct to Lord Chatham during his last administration—how keen and sharp notwithstanding had been the invectives which Lord Chatham had since hurled forth against the Throne, and, as he alleged, a secret influence behind the Throne. Under the sting of these impressions the King vehemently declared that he would not consent to send for “ that “ perfidious man ” as the next Prime Minister, but was ready to welcome him and his chief friends with open arms, if they were willing to be placed in office as the allies and auxiliaries of Lord North, and the existing Government. On that basis, and on that basis only, His

Majesty desired that overtures to Lord Chatham might be made.\*

Lord North's rejoinder appears to have been to the following effect—that he must adhere to his own request of being permitted to resign—but that he could only advise, he could not presume to dictate to His Sovereign as to the choice of the next Prime Minister—and that in compliance with His Majesty's desire he would proceed to ascertain how far Lord Chatham and his friends might be willing to coalesce with (in Lord North's own phrase) “the fundamentals of the present administration.”

Meanwhile there were some public measures admitting of no delay. The insulting French Note required some step to be taken, some step to vindicate the offended dignity of England. The King sent orders to his ambassador, Lord Stormont, to return home forthwith; and in consequence, the Marquis de Noail likewise took his departure from London. Thus was a war with the Court of Versailles impending, though not as yet avowed or declared. A Royal Message was read to both Houses, communicating the French Note, and assuring them that His Majesty was firmly determined to maintain and assert the honour of his Crown. Loyal Addresses were moved in reply, and were carried in each House by large majorities, but not without reproachful debates. In these the name of Chatham was more than once mentioned, as the only Minister who might still unite the confidence of all parties, who might deter France and Spain, who might reconcile America. Lord North, without publicly advertent to these hints, by no means concealed his own earnest desire of retirement.†

Measures were likewise taken at this juncture, by means of the Lords Lieutenant, to call out and assemble the

\* The King to Lord North, March 13. 1778. Appendix. The expression “that perfidious man,” occurs in the letter of the ensuing day.

† Lord North's expressions in Almon's Register, and the Parl. Hist. (vol. xix. p. 950.), declaring himself resolved not to quit the helm during the storm, must be, in a great measure, inaccurately given, as may be gathered from Mr. Aubrey's reply: “Since the “Noble Lord in the blue ribbon had so strongly expressed his desire “of retiring —.”

Militia in the several counties. Another matter requiring prompt despatch was the appointment of Commissioners under the new Conciliatory Bills. The intended names had been in great measure known and commented upon even before the Bills had passed. Lord Howe and Sir William were included in the Letters-Patent, on the chance of their still being in America when their colleagues should arrive. Of the new Commissioners, the first was to be Lord Carlisle; with him William Eden and George Johnstone. It could not be alleged that the selection of these gentlemen had been made in any narrow spirit of party.—George Johnstone, who retained the title of Governor from having filled that post in Florida, was a member of the House of Commons, and as such a keen opponent of Lord North.—The brother of William Eden had been the last Colonial Governor of Maryland. William Eden himself was a man of rising ability on the Government side; in after years, under Mr. Pitt, ambassador in succession to several foreign Courts, and at last a Peer, with the title of Lord Auckland.—Frederick Howard, the fifth Earl of Carlisle, was then only known to the public as a young and not very thrifty man of fashion and of pleasure. Against his appointment, therefore, there were many cavils heard both in and out of Parliament. Thus in one debate the Duke of Richmond said, “I have lately been told that one of the “Governors in America made objection to the Congress “because some of them sat in Council with woollen “caps on. Congress were highly offended at this, and “persisted in doing so. How inadequate, then, must “this embassy be, where a noble Lord, bred up in all the “softness that European manners make fashionable to “rank,—I say, how inadequate must such an embassy “be to men in woollen night-caps!”\*

It was through one of these Commissioners, namely

\* Debate in the Lords, March 9. 1778. In the same spirit Wilkes exclaimed of Lord Carlisle: “The Muses and the Graces, with “a group of little laughing loves, were in his train, and for the first “time crossed the Atlantic!” (Debate in the Commons, November 26. 1778.) See also an amusing *jeu d’esprit* which appeared in a London paper of that day, and which has been reprinted in the Appendix to the Life of Reed (vol. i. p. 423.).

Mr. Eden, that Lord North opened his communications to Lord Chatham. Mr. Eden could not see the great Earl, who was still at Hayes, but had several conversations with his trusted friend, Lord Shelburne.\* It was soon apparent, as Lord North must have foreseen, that Lord Chatham had not the smallest inclination to make common cause with the party in power. If he came into office at all, it must be on the call of his Sovereign, and as planning a new administration; it must be as what the King in high displeasure terms him—a Dictator. In Lord Chatham's own papers, as subsequently published, there appears no trace whatever of these overtures, which may probably have passed by messages and word of mouth. We only find that his family and friends, in common with the public, expected at this juncture a summons from St. James's. Thus writes William Pitt to his mother from his studies at Cambridge:—"I am not sure whether I can find in the history of antiquity any instance of a nation so miserably sacrificed as this has been; but I believe almost every page will furnish an example of the only method left to revive it,—re-curring in the extremity of danger to those whose superiority is unhappily as much proved by the failure of others as by their own success." Mr. Thomas Coutts, already rising into eminence as a banker in the Strand, transmits an offer of public service from Lord Rochford, and adds, to Lady Chatham: "I do not meet with any one who does not lament and wonder that His Majesty has not yet publicly desired the only help that can have a chance to extricate the country from the difficulties which every day grow greater."

If called upon, Lord Chatham was ready to obey the call. His blood was roused, as of yore, against the House of Bourbon, and he deemed that the war with France, if it could not be averted, should be most vigorously waged. We may gather, that it was his intention to propose, as

\* A full account of these conversations was drawn up by Mr. Eden at the time, and, after remaining in MS. for three quarters of a century, has at length appeared in Lord John Russell's *Memorials of Fox* (vol. i. p. 180—187.). Lord Shelburne said that, as he had often already declared, "Lord Chatham must be the Dictator." (1853.)



General-in-chief, Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick, who in his former administration had commanded our armies with so much glory and success.\* On reading the French note of the 13th, he had given his eldest son, Lord Pitt, permission to re-enter the army. Soon afterwards, accordingly, Lord Pitt sailed for Gibraltar, as an aide-de-camp to the Governor; he served long enough, let me observe in passing, to become, as second Earl of Chatham, himself the General and Governor of that fortress.

Meanwhile, many members of the Rockingham party, feeling, as they well might, greater confidence in Lord Chatham than in their own immediate chief, and not willing at this crisis to be absent from his thoughts, desired to transmit to him, through his friend Lord Granby, the expression of their sentiments. Of that overture there is nothing further known to me beyond its mention, as follows, by the King:—"I am extremely indifferent whether Lord Granby goes or does not go with the object message of the Rockingham party to Hayes: I will certainly send none to that place."†

At this moment, indeed, the King was more than ever incensed against Lord Chatham, from the high claims which the conversations with Lord Shelburne had disclosed. With a spirit as high, His Majesty protested that he would surrender the Crown sooner than stoop to Opposition. He called upon Lord North to answer one plain question, — Will you, like the Duke of Grafton, desert me at the hour of danger? Lord North, in reply, gave the King no hope of his consenting to remain in office permanently, but agreed, if the King should insist upon it, to carry through the present Session to its close. The King next desired that the Attorney-General, Mr. Thurlow, might forthwith be appointed Chancellor, as a preliminary step to the new arrangements. It was plainly His Majesty's object to continue the same system, though with other hands. But for that very reason, and with a just sense of his public duty, Lord North was most un-

\* See the observations of Lord Shelburne in the House of Lords, April 8. 1778.

† To Lord North, March 18. 1778.

willing to trammel and embarrass his successor, by having first disposed of the Great Seal.

It is certain, moreover, that the object of the King was at this juncture wholly unattainable—that if Lord North retired, as not willing or not able to carry his system further, no other administration on the same system could be formed. Of that fact there can be no stronger evidence than the language of Lord Barrington affords. Lord Barrington was then Secretary at War. Lord Barrington had ever been forward among the party or section of the “King’s friends.” Yet what are the terms of advice with which we find Lord Barrington, in this very month of March, address His Majesty? “I represented “to the King that he had not one General in whom His Majesty, the nation, or the army would place confidence, “in case of the invasion of Great Britain or Ireland, and “the necessity there was of bringing Prince Ferdinand “hither. . . . In a subsequent audience I thought it my “duty to represent to His Majesty the general dismay “which prevailed among all ranks and conditions; arising, “as I apprehended, from an opinion that the administration was not equal to the times; an opinion so universal “that it prevailed among those who were most dependent “on and attached to the Ministers, and even among the “Ministers themselves.”\*

Other testimonies from the same time all point to the same conclusion. The tide in favour of Lord Chatham was setting in too strong to be resisted. Great as was the King’s aversion, he must soon have yielded, as, notwithstanding aversions full as great, His Majesty did yield on other occasions, both before and since. It seems to me beyond all doubt, that had Lord Chatham’s last and fatal illness been delayed a few weeks, perhaps even a few days longer, he would have been called to the helm of public affairs, and invited, with such friends as he might choose, to solve the problem he had himself propounded—to regain the affections while refusing the independence of America.

\* Private Memorandum, drawn up by Lord Barrington, in March, 1778, and inserted in his *Life* by the Bishop of Durham (p. 186. unpublished).

In that arduous task could Lord Chatham have succeeded? Critics the most opposite have agreed that he could not. "Heaven," says Mr. Croker, "spared him the anxiety of the attempt, and, as we believe, the mortification of a failure."\* Mr. Macaulay argues with much zeal in behalf of Lord Rockingham's views, and considers Lord Chatham's as almost demonstrably fallacious. "Chatham," he says, "had repeatedly, and with great energy of language, declared that it was impossible to conquer America, and he could not without absurdity maintain that it was easier to conquer France and America together than America alone. But his passions overpowered his judgment. . . . That he was in error will scarcely, we think, be disputed by his warmest admirers."†

Yet in spite of the respect justly due to such high authority, some grounds for doubt, at least, might be alleged. In the first place let it be remembered with what great, what singular, advantages Lord Chatham would have set his hand to the work. He had from the outset most ably and most warmly supported the claims of the Colonists. Some of his eloquent sentences had become watchwords in their mouths. His statue had been erected in their streets, his portrait was hanging in their council-chambers. For his great name they felt a love and reverence higher as yet than for any one of their own chiefs and leaders—not even at that early period excepting Washington himself. Thus if even it could be said that overtures of reconciliation had failed in every other British hand, it would afford no proof that in Chatham's they might not have thriven and borne fruit. But what at the same period was the position of the Congress? Had that assembly shown of late an enlightened zeal for the public interests, and did it then stand high in the confidence and affection of its countrymen? Far other wise. The factions and divisions prevailing at their town of York; the vindictive rigour to political opponents, the neglect of Washington's army, and the cabals against Washington's power, combined to create disgust, with

\* Quarterly Review, No. cxxxi. p. 266. June, 1840.

† Edinburgh Review, No. clxii. p. 592. Oct. 1844.

other less avoidable causes,—as the growing depreciation of the paper-money, the ruinous loss of trade, and the augmented burdens of the war. Is the truth of this picture denied? Hear then as witnesses the Members of the Congress themselves. We find in this very month of March one of them write to another on the necessity of joint exertions to “revive the expiring reputation of the “Congress.”\* We find a third lamenting that “even “good Whigs begin to think peace, at some expense, “desirable.”†

When such was the feeling in America, both as regarded Lord Chatham and as regarded the Congress, it would not certainly follow that any overture from the former would be rejected on account of the disapprobation of the latter. The provinces might perhaps have been inclined to control the deliberations, or even to cast off the sway, of the central body, and make terms of peace for themselves. At least all such hope was not precluded; at least some such trial might be made. Nor does it appear to me, as to Mr. Macaulay, that there was any, even the slightest, inconsistency in Lord Chatham having first pronounced against the conquest of America, and yet refusing to allow her independence, after the declaration in her behalf of France. Lord Chatham had said no doubt that America could not be conquered. Had he ever said that she could not be reconciled? It was on conciliation, and not on conquest, that he built his later hopes. He thought the Declaration of France no obstacle to his views, but rather an instrument for their support. He conceived that the treaty of alliance concluded by the envoys of the Congress with the Court of Versailles might tend beyond any other cause to rekindle British feelings in the hearts of the Americans. Were the glories of Wolfe and Amherst, in which they had partaken, altogether blotted from their minds? Would the Puritans be inclined to make common cause with the Papists? Would the soldier-yeo-

\* Letter from William Duer of New York to Robert Morris, dated March 6. 1778, and printed in the *Life of Reed*, vol. i. p. 365.

† General Reed to President Wharton, February 1. 1778.

men of the Colonies be willing to fight side by side with those French whom, till within these fifteen years, they had found in Canada their bitter hereditary foes? That consequences like to these, that some such revulsion of popular feeling in America, might, perhaps, ensue from an open French alliance, is an apprehension which, during the first years of the contest, we find several times expressed in the secret letters of the Revolution chiefs; it was a possibility which we see called forth their fears; why then might it not be allowed to animate the hopes of Chatham?

In this state of parties and of public feeling, the Duke of Richmond, far unlike Lord Chatham, had become eager to close the American contest by a surrender of the British sovereignty. He gave notice of an Address to His Majesty for the 7th of April, entreating the King instantly to withdraw his fleets and armies from the Thirteen Revolted Provinces, and to make peace with them on such terms as might secure their good will. Lord Chatham was at that time slowly recovering from gout, and still much indisposed, at Hayes. No sooner did he hear of the intended Address than he determined to appear in the House of Lords and oppose it. For such an exertion it was clear that he had not yet regained sufficient strength of body nor even composure of mind. His family and friends endeavoured to dissuade him, but in vain. On the 7th of April then he came, or it might almost be said was carried in, walking with feeble steps, and leaning with one arm on his son William, with the other on Lord Mahon. Of the solemn and memorable scene which ensued I have already, in my sketch of Lord Chatham's character, given, by anticipation, some account.\* But since that time a letter from Lord Camden has been produced from the Grafton Correspondence, containing a more full and authentic description than we previously possessed. "The Earl "spoke," says Lord Camden, "but was not like him-

\* Vol. iii. p. 18. For Lord Camden's letter to the Duke of Grafton (April 9. 1778), see the Appendix to the present volume. The Duke was at this time attending the muster of the Militia in Suffolk.

“self; his speech faltered, his sentences broken, and his mind not master of itself. His words were shreds of unconnected eloquence and flashes of the same fire which he, Prometheus-like, had stolen from Heaven, and were then returning to the place from whence they were taken. Your Grace sees even I, who am a mere prose-man, am tempted to be poetical while I am discursing of this extraordinary man’s genius.” The purport of his speech was to rouse, if yet could be, a British spirit on both sides of the Atlantic; with an unconquerable courage he protested against surrendering the birth-right of the British princes, and the union of the British race and name. “I will never consent,” he cried, “to deprive the Royal offspring of the House of Brunswick, the heirs of” — (here he faltered for some moments, while striving to recall the name) — “of the Princess Sophia, of their fairest inheritance. My Lords, His Majesty succeeded to an empire as great in extent as its reputation was unsullied. Shall we tarnish the lustre of that empire by an ignominious surrender of its rights? . . . Shall we now fall prostrate before the House of Bourbon? Surely, my Lords, this nation is no longer what it was! Shall a people that, seventeen years ago, was the terror of the world, now stoop so low as to tell its ancient inveterate enemy: ‘Take all we have; only give us peace?’ It is impossible! I wage war with no man or set of men. I wish for none of their employments, nor would I cooperate with men who still persist in unretracted error. But in God’s name, if it is absolutely necessary to declare either for peace or war, and the former cannot be preserved with honour, why is not the latter commenced without hesitation? I am not, I confess, well informed of the resources of this kingdom, but I trust it has still sufficient, though I know them not, to maintain its just rights. My Lords, any state is better than despair. Let us at least make one effort, and if we must fall, let us fall like men!”

When Chatham had resumed his seat the Duke of Richmond rose to reply. “My Lords,” he said, “there is not a person present who more sincerely wishes than I do that America should remain dependent on this



country. But as I am convinced that it is now totally  
“ impracticable, I am anxious to retain the Americans as  
“ allies, because if they are not on terms of friendship  
“ with us they must necessarily throw themselves into  
“ the arms of France; and if we go to war with France  
“ on account of her late treaty, the Colonies will look  
“ upon themselves as bound in honour to assist her.  
“ And what prospect of success have we? . . . Not one  
“ of your Lordships has a more grateful memory than I  
“ have of the services performed for his country by the  
“ Noble Earl who spoke last; he raised its glory, repu-  
“ tation, and success to a height never before expe-  
“ rienced by any other nation. His Lordship’s name —  
“ I beg his pardon for mentioning it — the name of  
“ Chatham, will ever be dear to Englishmen; but while  
“ I grant this, I am convinced that the name of Chatham  
“ is not able to perform impossibilities; and that even  
“ high and respectable as it is, the present state of the  
“ country is by no means what it was when the Noble  
“ Earl was called to direct our councils. We had then  
“ America for us; we have now America against us;  
“ instead of Great Britain and America against France  
“ and Spain, it will now be France, Spain, and Ame-  
“ rica against Great Britain.”

At the conclusion of the Duke of Richmond’s speech Lord Chatham stood up to speak again. But his frame, already overwrought, was unequal to this last exertion. He staggered, and fell back in a fit, or, as termed by his friends, a swoon. To all appearance he lay in the very agonies of death. Deep and earnest was the sympathy. The debate was immediately adjourned. The Peers started up and crowded round the illustrious sufferer, eager to assist him. One only, the Earl of Mansfield, retained his seat, and looked with slight concern on the fall of his former rival; almost as much unmoved,” Lord Camden writes, “ as the senseless body itself.” In the arms of his friends Chatham was borne to a neighbouring apartment, and thence to a neighbouring house. By the prompt aid of a physician he had in some measure rallied, and within a few days could be removed to his own dwelling at Hayes. There, on the morning of the 11th of May, and in the seventieth year of his age, he ex-

pired. Whether since his seizure he ever recovered full consciousness, I do not find recorded. Of his last days nothing further is known, but I have observed that in the cast taken of his features after death, the mouth is greatly drawn on one side.

On the very day of his decease, Colonel Barré rose in the House of Commons to move that the remains of the great statesman should be interred at the public charge. He was seconded by Thomas Townshend, a rising Parliamentary speaker, afterwards Secretary of State and Lord Sydney. No voice but in eulogy was raised on this occasion. Even Rigby, with many professions of high respect, only said that, in his judgment, a monument to Lord Chatham's memory would be a more eligible, as well as a more lasting, testimony of the public gratitude. If, as is probable, Rigby's view in this suggestion was to defeat or elude the motion indirectly, he must have been not a little disappointed when he saw Dunning rise to say that he thought the two proposals in no degree opposed to each other, and that he would readily move Mr. Rigby's as an addition to Colonel Barré's. The amended motion, combining both proposals, was accordingly put from the Chair. Meanwhile Lord North, who had gone home, not expecting any business of this kind to be brought forward, entered the House in great haste. He declared himself happy to have arrived in time enough to give his vote in favour of the motion. He was only sorry, he said, that he had not breath enough, from the hurry in which he came, to express himself with the degree of respect which he wished to show to Lord Chatham's memory. The motion, as amended, then passed unanimously.

Two days afterwards the subject was resumed by Lord John Cavendish. He expressed his hope that the first vote would not be the limit of public gratitude, but that adequate provision might be made for the descendants of a statesman who, whilst in the nation's service, had ever neglected his own interests. In this suggestion, also, Lord North and the House cordially concurred. An Address was carried to the King, in consequence of which His Majesty declared his readiness to grant a pension of 4000*l.* a-year. and invited the aid of Parliament

that the same might be annexed for ever to the Earldom of Chatham. A measure for that purpose — the Chatham Annuity Bill — was accordingly brought in. The munificence of the House of Commons was completed by a vote of 20,000*l.* to discharge the debts which Lord Chatham left behind.

The Chatham Annuity Bill passed the House of Commons without one dissentient voice. Not so among the Lords. A keen debate, mainly on the plea of public economy, arose upon the third reading, when eleven Peers were found to vote in opposition to the Bill; and a Protest against it was afterwards signed by four. Let the names of these last by all means be duly recorded: they were the Lord Chancellor Bathurst, Archbishop Markham of York, the Duke of Chandos, and Lord Paget. Only a few days before Lord Camden had written as follows: — “Some few Lords, as I hear, are inclined to mutter dislike to the Bill. I do not know their names, and I hope they will be too wise to transmit them with this stain to posterity.”\*

To the House of Commons the City of London presented a petition praying that the remains of the great statesman, for whom they had ever felt especial love and reverence, might rest in the midst of themselves, beneath their own dome of St. Paul's. This petition was supported both by Dunning and Burke. “St. Paul's,” said Burke, “is now a mere desert, while Westminster Abbey is overcrowded.” But the preparations for Westminster Abbey were already made, and the Ministers little inclined to show favour to the constituents of Wilkes. In Westminster Abbey, therefore, were the remains of Chatham laid. It was moved by Lord Shelburne that the House of Peers, as a body, should attend his

\* To the Countess of Chatham, May 32. 1778. The signing of the protest by Archbishop Markham was certainly in no good taste, since it might be imputed to personal resentment. In the House of Lords, not long before (Dec 5. 1777), Lord Chatham had inveighed with severity against a sermon which the Archbishop had preached and published, reflecting on “the ideas of savage liberty,” in America. “These,” cried Chatham, “are the doctrines of Atterbury and Sacheverell!” The same sermon had also been the subject of animadversion in an earlier debate (May 30. 1777).

interment, but the motion was overruled by the majority of a single vote.

Notwithstanding the concurrence of all parties in the public funeral of Chatham, it was, with few exceptions, attended only by the party out of power. "Thus the 'government,'" writes Gibbon, "ingeniously contrived to 'secure the double odium of suffering the thing to be 'done, and of doing it with an ill grace.'\*" The pall was upheld by Burke and Savile, Thomas Townshend, and Dunning. The banner of the Barony of Chatham was borne by Colonel Barré, supported by the Marquis of Rockingham and the Dukes of Northumberland, Manchester, and Richmond. In the absence of the elder son on foreign service, the chief mourner was William Pitt, and in his train of eight Peers, as assistant mourners, walked Lord Shelburne and Lord Camden.

Over the dust of Chatham, in the northern transept of the Abbey, the stately monument decreed by the Commons to his memory soon afterwards arose. High above, and nobly wrought, stands his effigy, with eager gesture and outstretched arm, as though in act to hurl the thunderbolt of eloquence.† Not full twenty-eight years pass and the coffin of the son is brought beneath the father's statue! The pavement is opened and the same vault receives the second William Pitt! "What grave"—thus exclaims another illustrious man present at this last sad solemnity—"what grave contains such a father and 'such a son? What sepulchre embosoms the remains of 'so much human excellence and glory?'"‡

The sudden illness of the great statesman on the 7th of April was from the first regarded as fatal; as closing, at all events, his political career. On the very next morning we find the King write as follows to Lord North:—"May not the political exit of Lord Chatham 'incline you to continue at the head of my affairs?'"

\* Letter to Holroyd, June 12. 1778.

† This phrase, or one not far dissimilar, is applied to great orators by one of themselves. "*Brachium procerius projectum quasi 'quoddam telum orationis,'*"—are the words of Cicero. (*De Oratore*, lib. iii. c. 59.)

‡ Letter of Lord Wellesley, dated November 22. 1836, and published in the *Quarterly Review*, No. cxiv. p. 487.

Lord North, on his part, continued to the end of the Session to express his earnest desire to resign. But he could no longer point with clearness to the choice of a successor. The small party which Chatham had headed, though comprising such names as Shelburne, Dunning, and Barré, could not hope to form a government of themselves since they had lost their chief. The Whigs, under Lord Rockingham, had, in great measure at least, committed themselves to the independence of America; and on that ground Lord North could not but deprecate their return to power. There was henceforth no great statesman to lead to that middle path, that course of conciliation without compromise, which Chatham had pointed out, and might perhaps have trodden. Under these altered circumstances, Lord North was gradually prevailed upon to remain in office. At the close of the Session he also complied with the King's desire, and greatly added, not indeed to the moderation of his councils, but to his resources of debate, by accepting or inviting the resignation of Lord Bathurst, and conferring the Great Seal, with a peerage, upon Thurlow.

It was likewise, at this juncture, that the King, without solicitation, showed his sense of Lord North's services by appointing him Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports. To that office, at that time, was attached, besides the possession of Walmer Castle, the annual salary of 5000*l*. Henceforth, then, the official emoluments of Lord North, as First Lord of the Treasury, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, and as Lord Warden, exceeded 12,000*l*. a year. It might, perhaps, have been more thoroughly consistent with his amiable and upright character, had he, at so difficult a crisis, and while kept in office in his own despite, refrained from so great remuneration. Already, during the past Session, there had appeared in the House of Commons a strong distaste to large official profits. A motion had been made by Mr. Gilbert to lay a tax of no less than one-fourth on the incomes of placemen and pensioners; this tax to continue during the continuance of the American war. Let the reader, if he can, picture to himself the horror and surprise, on this occasion, of such men as Mr. Rigby! — The motion was affirmed in Committee by a majority of eighteen; next

day, on bringing up the Report, it was, after great exertions, rescinded by no more than six. In like manner a Bill from Sir Philip Jennings Clerke, to exclude contractors from the House of Commons, unless their contracts were obtained by a public bidding, was carried through the first division, and barely negatived on the second.\*

In the course of these last debates some strong instances of disadvantageous bargains were adduced by Sir Philip. These might, perhaps, be questioned; but who, in the present day at least, will deny the truth of his general remarks?—"It is impossible not to perceive that giving these contracts to Members is an arrant job, and creates a dangerous influence in this House; for the more money is raised on the public the greater is the profit to these gentlemen. . . . We should not hear one Member rise up and assure the House that he sells his coals as cheap as any merchant in London; another should not engage to furnish coats, another should not contract to supply shoes! I never heard of there being any tailors or shoemakers in this House." To such arguments Lord George Gordon, in a maiden speech, added some personal abuse. "The Noble Lord in the blue riband (Lord North) is himself the greatest of all contractors; he is a contractor for men, a contractor for your flock, Mr. Speaker, a contractor for the representatives of the people. . . . Oh, let that Noble Lord 'turn from his wickedness, and live!'"

The latter part of the Session was also marked by the return of General Burgoyne to England, and his re-appearance in the House of Commons. On a motion by Mr. Vyner he had an opportunity to deliver, in vindication of his conduct, an able speech. His reception by the Government was by no means such as he had hoped. The King refused to admit him to his presence, and when, hereupon, the General asked for a Court Martial, or Commission of Inquiry, he was reminded that, according to precedents, a prisoner on parole could not be tried. Under such circumstances Burgoyne, perhaps too eagerly and warmly, threw himself into the arms of

\* *Parl. Hist.* vol. xix. pp. 873. 1088.



Opposition. They, on their part, in pursuance of the tactics too common in such cases, no sooner found him disposed to join them, than they viewed him with altered eyes. From censures of his conduct they passed over to declare that his first instructions had been faulty, and his ill reception undeserved. With Lord North he continued on a footing of courtesy and respect, but he did not spare Lord George Germaine. Certainly some allowance should be made for his excited feelings, when his painful position is considered; when all he asked was the speediest opportunity to defend himself before some competent tribunal, and then abide its judgment. "I provoke a trial!" he cried. "Give me inquiry! I put the interests that hang most emphatically by the heart-strings of man—my fortune—my honour—my head—I had almost said my salvation,—upon the test!"\*

But this Session of Parliament was not wholly engrossed by financial or American affairs. It is also memorable for the relaxation which it sanctioned of the Penal Code against the English Roman Catholics. For a long time they had suffered in silence. At length, on the 1st of May in this year, a most loyal and dutiful Address was presented to the King from the principal members of their body, declaring not merely their obedience to the Government, but their attachment to the Constitution. "Our exclusion," say they, "from many of its benefits has not diminished our reverence to it. . . . We beg leave to assure Your Majesty that we hold no opinions repugnant to the duties of good citizens. And we trust that this has been shown more decisively by our irreproachable conduct for many years past, under circumstances of public discountenance and displeasure, than it can be manifested by any declaration whatever." A few days afterwards Sir George Savile, seconded by Dunning, brought in a Bill to relieve the Roman Catholics from some at least of the penalties upon them. The objects of the proposed

\* Parl. Hist. vol. xix. p. 1194. In reply, Lord George Germaine was provoked to some personalities. He declared that Monsieur St. Luc, a Canadian officer, to whose testimony on some points Burgoyne appealed, had in conversation said to him of the General "*C'est un brave homme, mais lourd comme un Allemand!*"

repeal were these :— The punishment of priests or Jesuits who should be found to teach or officiate in the services of their Church ; such acts being felony in foreigners and high treason in natives of the realm. The forfeitures of Popish heirs who had received their education abroad, and whose estates went to the next Protestant heir. The power given to the son or other nearest relative, being a Protestant, to take possession of his father's or kinsman's estate during the life of the rightful owner. And the debarring of Roman Catholics from the power of acquiring legal property by any other means than by descent. Some of these penalties, said Dunning, had now ceased to be necessary, and others were at all times a disgrace to human nature. They were imposed (this, indeed, is the only palliation for them) in the reign of William, when the people had so lately escaped the danger, and were still impressed with the dread, of Popery. It might be said in their defence that in general they had not been put in execution, but in some instances they had ; and Sir George Savile declared himself cognisant of cases in which Romanists were living, not only under terror, but even under pecuniary payments to informers, in consequence of the powers that the law conferred.

The period of proposing the repeal of these penalties was no doubt happily chosen. All men felt that this was no time to make new malcontents. All men, in Parliament at least, felt that rigours such as these were utterly unjustifiable. Thurlow, then still Attorney-General, and other zealous friends of the Church, gave the measure their support. Henry Dundas, the Lord Advocate of Scotland, who was already rising into fame as a speaker and a statesman, regretted only that the measure would afford no relief in his own country. The Act now sought to be repealed having passed before the Union did not apply to Scotland ; the Scotch, however, had a statute passed by their own Parliament in nearly the same terms as the English ; and for the repeal of this Scottish Act, Dundas promised to move in another Session. With such support the Bill passed, it may be said, unanimously through both Houses. Almost the only

whisper of opposition came from a zealous Whig, Bishop Hinchcliffe of Peterborough.

From the unanimity on this occasion within the walls of Parliament it would scarcely have been supposed that forty years were still to pass before the Roman Catholics attained the enjoyment of equal civil rights—or that this question would, beyond any other, prove to be the stumbling block of successive Ministries, the battle-cry of successive elections. While the measure of relief was still in progress there was little or no ferment out of doors. But the year had not closed before it was apparent that the animosity against the Papists had not died away—it was only sleeping. With no misconduct whatever on their part, real or imputed, a few zealots found it easy to rouse the feeling and renew the cry. It was in Scotland that the ferment rose, both the soonest and the highest, because it was to Scotland only that the still expected measure would apply. The Synod of Glasgow and some others passed Resolutions for opposing any Bill in favour of the Roman Catholics to the north of Tweed. At Edinburgh, and several other Scottish towns, Associations were formed for the defence of the Protestant interest. To produce and keep alive the popular impression neither the press nor yet the pulpit were neglected. The members of the obnoxious persuasion in the capital of Scotland could not keep their houses without terror, nor yet walk the streets without insult. The same system of insult and threat was soon extended to all those who were supposed to favour them. Thus the cry was loud against Dr. Robertson, the justly esteemed historian. And why? Because to his other merits he added that of toleration.

To the annals of the two next years it will belong to tell how from Scotland these ferments spread to England; how from threats and murmurs they ripened into riots. Meanwhile it may be noticed that, though the malcontents were many, they were long without a leader. No man with the slightest claim to be a statesman would afford them the slightest countenance. At length they found a congenial tool and mouth-piece in one who had to recommend him at least rank and youth and earnestness of purpose. This was Lord George Gordon, a younger

son of the Duke of that name. He was born in 1750, and George the Second was his godfather. His life was not a long one, since he died at the age of forty-two, yet within that space few men have ever run through more fantastic vicissitudes. He began his career as a Midshipman; he ended his career as a Jew. At this time, however, he was a Christian; and scarce allowed any others, besides Protestants, to be so. He had entered Parliament in 1774, as Member for the small borough of Luggershall, and though silent for some Sessions, and even apparently during the progress of the Roman Catholic Relief Bill, he began shortly afterwards to be noted for vehement No Popery harangues. Showing little talent he excited little attention in the House, but his zeal was sufficient to win him the confidence of the multitude whose prejudices he espoused.

In these prejudices, as in most other popular delusions, we may no doubt discover, or think that we discover, some foundation of truth. We may be willing to acknowledge that they proceeded from a just attachment to the Reformed faith and established Churches of the country. But we must deplore, as a foul stain on our national character, the errors and excesses to which, in the ensuing years, that attachment gave rise.

## CHAPTER LVIII.

WE left Washington at the close of 1777 contending against difficulties and privations of no ordinary kind. On his urgent and renewed representation, the Congress at length decided that a Committee, consisting in part of Members of their own body, should proceed to his camp at Valley Forge. These gentlemen beheld his distress with their own eyes. Yet still the practical succours of the Government were doled out with a slow and niggard hand. On the 20th of March we find the Commander-in-chief write to one of his Generals as follows : — “By death  
“and desertion we have lost a good many men since we  
“came to this ground, and have encountered every species  
“of hardship that cold, wet, and hunger, and want of  
“clothes were capable of producing. Notwithstanding,  
“and contrary to my expectations, we have been able to  
“keep the soldiers from mutiny or dispersion. They have  
“two or three times been days together without provisions; and once six days without any of the meat  
“kind. Could the poor horses tell their tale, it would be  
“in a strain still more lamentable, as numbers have actually died from pure want. But as our prospects begin to  
“brighten, my complaints shall cease.”

Under circumstances of such discouragement, and slighted as Washington's advice as to promotions had now begun to be, it is not surprising that the greatest dissatisfaction should have prevailed among his officers. Four days later he thus reports : — “As it is not improper for  
“Congress to have some idea of the present temper of the  
“army, it may not be amiss to remark in this place that,  
“since the month of August last, between two and three  
“hundred officers have resigned their commissions, and  
“many others were with difficulty dissuaded from it.”

The military business at the seat of Government was at this period directed by a new Board of War, which

had been formed early in the winter, and which had for President, General Gates, flushed with his success at Saratoga, and constant in his enmity to Washington. There was now in progress a secret intrigue to deprive, if possible, the latter of the chief command, and confer it either on Gates himself, or on Charles Lee. For it is remarkable that there was no native American whom Washington's gainsayers could oppose to him with any prospect of success. This intrigue has been called "Conway's Cabal," from the name of one of those most forward in it. Brigadier Thomas Conway was an officer of Washington's army. In October 1777 Washington heard that it was the intention of Congress to promote this person to the rank of Major General. Hereupon Washington addressed a letter to one of the leading Members, Richard Henry Lee, representing that Conway was the youngest Brigadier in the service; that to put him over the heads of all the elder would offend them grievously; that Conway's merits existed in his own imagination more than in reality; and, finally, that Washington himself could not hope to be of any further service if such insuperable difficulties were thrown in his way. Mr. Lee replied in these words: "No such appointment has been made, nor do I believe it will" whilst it is likely to produce the evil consequences you "suggest." Yet, notwithstanding this denial, the appointment was made only a few weeks afterwards.

Thus promoted, Conway became an active instrument of the cabal which has subsequently borne his name. He leagued himself with several other ambitious officers and scheming Members of Congress; several, above all, from the New England States. It is striking to observe the impression produced by these intrigues on the ingenuous mind of La Fayette. Thus he writes to Washington: — "When I was in Europe I thought that here almost every man was a lover of liberty. You can conceive my astonishment when I saw that Toryism was as apparently professed as Whiggism itself. There are open dissensions in Congress; parties who hate one another as much as the common enemy; men who, without knowing any thing about war, undertake to judge you and to make ridiculous comparisons. They are in-



“fatuated with Gates, without thinking of the difference of circumstances, and believe that attacking is the only thing necessary to conquer.”\*

Of these intrigues the conduct pursued to La Fayette himself was soon to afford another instance. He was appointed the chief of an expedition against Canada, which had been planned and ordered by the Board of War, without any reference whatever to the Commander-in-chief. La Fayette accordingly set out for Albany. There, on consultation with General Schuyler and other good officers, he found that the Board of War, so strenuous on paper, had neglected any real preparation for the field. Neither men nor clothes, nor money nor supplies, were in readiness, nor likely to be so. It therefore became necessary for La Fayette, though with great regret, to relinquish the enterprise and return to the middle provinces. It is due to him to observe that, through the whole of this transaction, he had acted with perfect honour and cordial regard to Washington. The latter pithily observes, in one of his private letters of the period: “I shall say no more of the Canada expedition than that it is at an end. I never was made acquainted with a single circumstance relating to it.”†

It was not until mid-April that a better hope for harmony arose, a majority of Congress deciding that General Gates should relinquish the Board of War and resume his command in the Northern district. Such was the prospect of affairs in the camp at Valley Forge, when Washington received the first draft of Lord North's Conciliatory Bills. While forwarding them to the President

\* Letter, Dec. 30. 1777. See Washington's Writings, vol. v. pp. 99. 488. The whole of Mr. Sparks's note in the Appendix headed “Conway's Cabal,” is well deserving of perusal, though seeking to glide gently over the participation of the New England members. For his proof to the contrary he appeals to the biography of Mr. Elbridge Gerry, which, however, seems to me wholly inconclusive, and to make (for an American book) one most singular blunder. It says that “Mr. Samuel Adams left Philadelphia” — meaning the seat of Congress — “for Massachusetts, on November 11. 1777.” But Philadelphia was then in possession of the British troops. See Austin's Life of Gerry, vol. i. 236.

† To Major-General Armstrong, March 27. 1778.

of Congress, he did not conceal his apprehensions that they might have what he terms "a malignant influence" on the public in America.\* But joy and thankfulness became predominant in his mind when, early in May, landed Mr. Simeon Deane, brother of the plenipotentiary at Paris, and bearer of the treaty of alliance between France and the United States. "It has pleased the Almighty Ruler of the Universe," says Washington, in his General Orders, "to raise us up a powerful friend among the Princes of the earth. It becomes us then to set apart a day for gratefully acknowledging the Divine goodness and celebrating the important event." The day thus set apart was commenced with public prayer; there was afterwards a general muster of the troops, and a general discharge of the small arms; a volley from the cannon of thirteen rounds in honour of the Thirteen States; and a huzza from the whole army, "Long live the King of France!"

Earlier in the year Washington, among his other military cares, had attentively considered the best measures to be taken for the defence of Hudson's River. Hitherto that object had been attained by Forts Montgomery and Clinton. But these having been demolished by the British, the question arose as to the most eligible place for the construction of new works. On full reflection and inquiry West Point was selected. There, accordingly, strong batteries were soon in rapid progress which, supported as they were by CHEVAUX-DE-FRISE and by the old boom of Fort Montgomery, seemed fully sufficient to secure the passage up the stream.

The first step taken by Washington to commence the campaign was in the middle of May, by sending the Marquis de La Fayette with 2400 men to take post on Barren Hill. Against this force a much larger was despatched from Philadelphia in two divisions, which La Fayette only escaped by a precipitate retreat. Such, together with a few foraging excursions, is the only feat to be recorded of the British troops during many months. Through the whole of the spring and winter they had remained almost wholly inactive; the young officers engaged

\* Letter, April 18. 1778.

in diversions—as high play and loose amours—that gave no small offence to the sober Philadelphians. Sir William Howe was much beloved for his warm heart and winning manners; and the news of his recall was heard with great concern. Before he sailed for England twenty-two of the field officers combined to entertain him at a splendid festival, to which they gave the Italian name of MISCHIANZA, or Medley. It was the imitation of a Tournament; the first, perhaps, ever displayed in the New World. Knights in rich array, each attended by a Squire, each bearing some motto or device, each appearing in honour of some peerless damsel whose name was publicly proclaimed, entered the lists and tilted against each other, whilst ladies looked on in Turkish attire, ready to bestow the prize of valour on the victors.\* No doubt it was honourable to the General on his retirement to receive that parting token of regard, but perhaps more honourable still had he left his army a little less of leisure for it!

The successor of Howe, Sir Henry Clinton, was in character as upright and amiable; in skill and enterprise much superior. Had the earlier stages of the war been under his direction, his ability might not have been without influence upon them. But it was his misfortune to be appointed only at a time when other foes had leagued against us, when the path was beset with thorns and briars, when scarce any laurels rose in view. In consequence of the impending war with France, and in conformity with the advice of Lord Amherst to the King, instructions had been addressed to Sir Henry, on the 23d of March, to retire from the hard-won city of Philadelphia, and concentrate his forces at New York. This order reached him at Philadelphia in the month of May: only a few days after he had assumed the chief command; only a few days before there came on shore the British Commissioners for peace. These Commissioners might

\* See a full account of the Mischianza (May 18. 1778) in the Annual Register for that year, p. 264. The device which the officers put forth for General Howe, was gracefully chosen; a setting sun with the motto:

"Luceo discedens, aucto splendore resurgam."

well complain with some warmth, in a secret letter to Lord George Germaine, that an order so important, so directly bearing on the success of their mission, should have been studiously concealed from them until they landed in America and beheld it in progress of execution. Thus to a private friend wrote Lord Carlisle:—“We arrived at this place, after a voyage of six weeks, on Saturday last, and found every thing here in great confusion, the army upon the point of leaving the town, and about three thousand of the miserable inhabitants embarked on board of our ships to convey them from a place where they think they would receive no mercy from those who will take possession after us.\*

Thus, from the first, the Commissioners had against them the news of a retreat from Philadelphia and the news of a treaty at Paris. Further still they had against them, as the Opposition in England had along foreseen and foretold, the fact of their connexion with Lord North. Even at the outset, before their offers could be known, one of the leaders in America, General Joseph Reed, answered a private note from one of them as follows:—“I shall only say that, after the unparalleled injuries and insults this country has received from the men who now direct the affairs of Britain, a negotiation under their auspices has much to struggle with.”† How different might have been his feelings had they brought their commission from Lord Chatham!

Not any, even the smallest opening, was afforded to these messengers of peace. They desired to despatch to the seat of Congress their secretary, Dr. Adam Ferguson, the well-known Professor of Edinburgh, and they applied to Washington for a passport, but Washington refused it until the pleasure of Congress should be known. The Congress, on the other part, had put forth a Resolution

\* To G. Selwyn, June 10. 1778; printed in the Selwyn Correspondence. In a later letter from New York, Lord Carlisle thus sums up his general impressions: “The country is beautiful beyond description; the climate the worst I ever experienced.” It is interesting to compare his remarks with those of his grandson, the present Earl. (Lecture at Leeds, 1850.)

† To Governor Johnstone, June 14. 1778. Life of Reed, vol. i. p. 373.

declining even to hold any conference with the Commissioners, unless, as a preliminary, they should either withdraw the fleets and armies, or else, in express terms, acknowledge the Independence of the United States. In vain did the Commissioners address the President of Congress, and entreat some consideration of their terms. Their powers were, indeed, most ample. They declared themselves ready to agree that no military forces should be maintained in North America without the consent of the General Congress or particular Assemblies; that measures should be taken to discharge the debts of America and to raise the credit and value of the paper circulation; that in order to cement the union with the mother-country, there should be a reciprocal deputation of an agent or agents from the different States, who should have a seat and voice in Parliament, or, if sent from Britain, a seat and voice in the several Assemblies; and that there should be established the power of the respective legislatures in each State to settle its revenue, and to exercise a perfect freedom of legislation and internal government. In short, in the very words of the Commissioners, there was offered the irrevocable enjoyment of every privilege short of a total separation of interests. To none of these terms, so tempting heretofore, would the Congress hearken; and, after their first letter, they decided in a summary manner that no further reply should be returned.

Not that such offers were altogether without effect upon the people. Several Members of the Congress found it necessary to write to their constituents to explain and vindicate their votes in this transaction. Only a few weeks previously, Washington himself had observed: "There are symptoms which may authorise an opinion that the people of America are pretty generally weary of the present war."\* So far as we can judge, it would seem, moreover, that dislike of the French nation, and distrust of the French alliance, were widely spread. But under all the circumstances of Great

\* Letter to Mr. John Banister, April 21. 1778. On the 25th La Fayette writes to Washington, that he fears the three Commissioners more than ten thousand men.

Britain this was not so prevalent in any one State as of itself to overpower the common acquiescence in the measures of the central body.

The Commissioners throve no better with their private correspondence than with their public overtures. Governor Johnstone having exchanged some letters with Joseph Reed and Robert Morris, his former friends, let fall some hints as to the honours and rewards which might attend the promoters of a reconciliation. These hints, though incautiously made, were perhaps too jealously construed as attempts at corruption, as offers of a bribe. The letters were immediately laid before Congress, and by Congress were most angrily resented. Another incident which arose from these transactions was of the ludicrous kind; proceeding as it did from the boyish petulance of La Fayette. Some expressions in the public letter of the Commissioners to the President of Congress had reflected on the conduct of France; these moved his ire; and, in spite of Washington's advice, he challenged Lord Carlisle to meet him in single combat. To such a challenge, said Lord Carlisle, he found it difficult to return a serious answer.

Finding it impossible to proceed with their negotiation, the Commissioners prepared to re-embark for England. First, however, they issued a Manifesto, or Proclamation, to the American people, appealing to them against the decisions of the Congress, and offering to the Colonies at large, or singly, a general or separate peace. This Proclamation was in most parts both ably and temperately argued. But there was one passage liable to just exception. The Commissioners observed, that hitherto the hopes of a re-union had checked the extremes of war. Henceforth the contest would be changed. If the British Colonies were to become an accession to France, the laws of self-preservation must direct Great Britain to render the accession of as little avail as possible to her enemy. Mr. Fox, and others of the Opposition in the House of Commons, inveighed with great plausibility against this passage, as threatening a war of savage desolation. Others, again, as friends to Lord Carlisle and Mr. Eden, asserted that no such meaning was implied. The error, whatever it might be, lay with the Commissioners, and



in no degree with the Government at home. For Lord North denied, in the most express terms, that Ministers had intended to give the least encouragement to the introduction of any new kind of war in North America.\*

Meanwhile the British army had relinquished Philadelphia and retired to New York. Sir Henry's first intention was to go by water, but he found that the transports were not sufficient for the whole, and that he must have left on shore great part of his cavalry, all the provision-trains, and all the loyalists who dreaded the vengeance of their countrymen. Under these circumstances he determined to lead the troops by land; and his retreat through the Jerseys, encumbered as it was with baggage and camp-followers, has been often admired as a masterpiece of strategy. On the 18th of June the last of the British marched out of Philadelphia, and the first of the Americans marched in. An eye-witness among the latter, Joseph Reed, thus speaks of what he saw:—"The enemy evacuated this place on Thursday. I came in the same evening, and it exhibited a new and curious scene; many gloomy countenances, but more joyful ones. Shops shut up, and all in great anxiety and suspense." By Washington's directions, General Arnold was immediately put in command of the city, with strict orders to restrain as far as possible every kind of persecution, insult, or abuse. Nor was it long ere the Congress returned from the town of York to their former seat. Their presence in Philadelphia was of itself some security against acts of violence, although little or no regard had been shown to the wise and magnanimous advice of Washington for extending equal protection to men of opposite opinions.†

\* Debate in the House of Commons, Dec. 4. 1778.

† Previous to the retreat of the British, Washington had seriously warned the Congress, that "for want of this" (pardon and protection), "hundreds, nay, thousands of people, and among them many valuable artisans, with large quantities of goods, will be forced from Philadelphia, who otherwise would willingly remain. . . . A proscribing system, or laws having the same effect, when carried to a great extent, ever appeared to me to be impolitic," &c. Mr. Sparks has refrained from inserting the letter containing these remarkable words, but it may be found in the collection of 1795 (vol. ii. p. 283.), the date being June 2. 1778.

While marching through the Jerseys, the British troops were followed and harassed by Washington. Nearly all his officers, being consulted, gave advice against bringing them to an engagement; the Commander-in-chief nevertheless determined to attack their rear. He sent forward, accordingly, a strong detachment under General Charles Lee, now released from his captivity; and an action ensued at Monmouth Court House on the 28th of June. Lee withdrew from the ground without orders, and, as was alleged, without necessity; and he was closely pursued by the British; but Washington coming up effectually put a stop to their advance. So intense was the midsummer heat, that several men on both sides dropped dead without a wound. Both armies sustained a nearly equal loss, — between three and four hundred on each side, — and both in the evening occupied the same positions as at first; but in the course of the night Sir Henry Clinton silently withdrew his men, and pursued his march. Thus on the whole it was a pitched battle; the advantage, if any, being rather on the side of the British, who had fought only to secure their retreat, and who had succeeded in that object. The Americans ascribed their disappointment to the fault of General Lee; he was tried by a Court-Martial, found guilty, and by a lenient sentence suspended from command for one year. His chief consolation and employment in his disgrace appears to have been most virulent railing against Washington.

The British army being now concentrated at New York and Rhode Island, its principal attention was directed to the movements of the Toulon squadron. The equipment of that squadron had been actively pressed and nearly completed before the French Declaration of the 13th of March; it left port soon afterwards, and early in July appeared off the coast of America. There were six frigates and twelve ships of the line, the commander being Count D'Estaing; and there was on board Monsieur Gerard, accredited as Minister to the United States. The force under Lord Howe was very far inferior; fewer ships and those for the most part smaller than D'Estaing's; besides that they had been long on service, and were in ill condition. The first object of D'Estaing had been to surprise them in the Delaware; but he arrived too late;

the British had already sailed for New York. D'Estaing next directed his course to Sandy Hook, hoping to force the entrance of the harbour; but he was dissuaded by the advice of some pilots, and, altogether changing his plans, steered for Rhode Island, and sailed up the Newport river. An attack against the British in that quarter had been projected between the new allies; the French promised to land from their ships 4000 troops, and the Americans actually sent a detachment of 10,000 under General Sullivan. The British troops, only 5000 strong, retired within their lines at Newport.

At these tidings Lord Howe, whose intended successor, Admiral Byron, had not as yet arrived, issued forth from the Hudson, and sailed in pursuit of D'Estaing. The two fleets were on the point of engaging when separated by a violent storm; there were only conflicts between some single ships, in which the honour of the British Flag was worthily maintained. D'Estaing now declared, that his fleet was so far damaged by the tempest as to compel him to put into Boston harbour and refit. In this resolution he persisted, although Sullivan, Greene, and other American officers altogether denied the necessity, and even transmitted to him a written protest against it, couched in acrimonious terms. Certain it is that the course which D'Estaing pursued on this occasion, not only forced the Americans to relinquish their enterprise upon Rhode Island, but roused up among them a bitter feeling against the French. To such an extent was this animosity carried, that riots ensued in the streets of Boston between the American seamen and their new allies.

During this time Sir Henry Clinton sent out several expeditions in various quarters. At Old Tappan a body of American horsemen, under Colonel Baylor, were surprised and routed, or put to the sword. In Egg Harbour great part of Count Pulasky's foreign legion was cut to pieces. At Buzzard's Bay, and on the island called Martha's Vineyard, many American ships were taken or destroyed, storehouses burned, and contributions of sheep and oxen levied. In these expeditions the principal commander was General Charles Grey, an officer of great zeal and ardour, whom the Americans sometimes surnamed "the No-flint General," from his common

practice of ordering his men to take the flints out of their muskets, and trusting to their bayonets alone.\* After some twenty years of further service, the veteran was raised, by the favour of his Sovereign, to the peerage, as Lord Grey of Howick, and afterwards Earl Grey. His son became Prime Minister, and the greatest orator who since the death of Chatham had appeared in the House of Lords.

In other parts of the Continent, the intermingling of savages in the war, even though with no authority from the chiefs, was productive of dreadful excesses. Thus at this time the fair settlement of Wyoming, on the Susquehanna, and under the dominion of Congress, was ferociously sacked and burned, its inhabitants being put to the sword, and little mercy shown either to women or children. The aggressors on this occasion were a troop of wild Indians, in conjunction with some Tory exiles. They were headed by Colonel Butler, a partisan commander of note, and by Joseph Brandt, a half Indian in birth, a whole Indian in cruelty. Unhappily at Wyoming the soil was claimed both by Connecticut and Pennsylvania. From this conflict of pretensions, and consequent laxity of law, there had been the freer license for rigours against the loyalists. Few of them in that district but had undergone imprisonment, or exile, or confiscation of property; and thus were they at last provoked to form a savage alliance, and to perpetrate a fierce revenge.

Another such scene of ruthless havoc, under the same leaders, took place at Cherry Valley, when an officer from Massachusetts, Ichabod Alden, was surprised and slain. The Americans vowed vengeance, and they kept their word. An expedition from Pennsylvania, under a different Colonel Butler, and another expedition from Virginia, under Colonel Clarke, having accomplished most toilsome marches, fell upon several back-settlements connected with the British or Canadians, compelling the allegiance of some, and with sword and fire laying the others waste.

Such successes as that at Old Tappan were regarded

\* Ramsay's Hist. vol. ii. p. 94.

as mere subordinate objects by Sir Henry Clinton. His main purpose at this time was to carry the war into the Southern States. Hitherto the attempt had been to conquer the Colonies from north to south. Might not better success attend the opposite endeavour of proceeding from south to north, beginning where the loyal party was the strongest, and where the power of defence was least? With these views, in which the Cabinet at home participated, Sir Henry despatched a body of 3500 men by sea to Georgia. Its capital, Savannah, was defended by the American General, Robert Howe, but it was quickly carried, and the entire province reduced. Great part of the colonists consented to take the oath of allegiance to the King, and to form rifle-companies in the Royal cause.

Sir Henry had also received secret instructions from his Government to make a further detachment of 5000 men to the West Indies, the object being an attack on St. Lucia. These troops he sent according to his orders. Certainly, however, he had good reason for observing at the same time to the Secretary of State:—"With an army so much diminished at New York, nothing important can be done, especially as it is also weakened by sending 700 men to Halifax, and 300 to Bermuda."\* Indeed, for many months afterwards the army at New York could fulfil little more than the duties of a garrison.

Early in November Count D'Estaing, with the French squadron, quitted the port of Boston, and sailed for the West Indies, there to pursue exclusively French objects. Deep was the disappointment, and loud the animadversion, of the Americans in the northern provinces. They had formed the most sanguine hopes from the French alliance. They had found that alliance as yet little better than a name. Moreover, just before the departure of D'Estaing, he had given them another valid reason for displeasure. He had issued a proclamation to the people of Canada, inviting, though in guarded terms, their return to the sway of their former Sovereign. It need scarcely be observed that such views were most directly repugnant

\* To Lord George Germaine, October 8. 1778.

to the terms of the treaty signed only nine months before. Nor did it seem easy to believe, as is still asserted, that D'Estaing was acting in utter ignorance of the real intentions of his Court.\* Under such circumstances, the conduct of the majority of Congress was such as to justify, in a most striking manner, the complaints of their incapacity which we find in Washington's private letters at this period. They eagerly embraced a project from La Fayette for another invasion of Canada, to be concerted between themselves and the Court of Versailles; and they shut their eyes to the obvious probability, that the King of France would insist on retaining Canada, if conquered by his aid.

From this risk, as from so many others, both before and since, was the Congress rescued by the foresight and the firmness of Washington. He induced them, though not without great difficulty, to postpone, at least, this favourite scheme. Thus he expostulated with the President:—"France,—acknowledged for some time past "the most powerful monarchy in Europe by land,—able "now to dispute the empire of the sea with Great Britain, and if joined with Spain, I may say, certainly "superior,—if possessed of New Orleans, on our right, "and of Canada, on our left, and if seconded by the "numerous tribes of Indians in our rear, from one extremity to the other,—a people so friendly to her, and "whom she knows so well how to conciliate,—would, it "is much to be apprehended, have it in her power to give "law to these States. . . . I fancy that I read in the "countenances of some people on this occasion more than "the disinterested zeal of allies. . . . But upon the "whole, Sir, to waive every other consideration, I do "not like to add to the number of our national obligations. I would wish as much as possible to avoid giving "a foreign Power new claims of merit for services per-

\* See a note to Mr. Sparks's edition of Washington's Writings, vol. vi. p. 113.; and the life of Gouverneur Morris, vol. i. p. 189. The Proclamation itself appears in the Ann. Regist. 1779, p. 355. D'Estaing says to the Canadians: "To bear the arms of parricides against it" (your mother country) "must be the completion of misfortunes." But was not this rather dangerous ground for him to touch upon with his new allies?



“formed to the United States, and would ask no assistance that is not indispensable.”\*

The part that Washington took on this occasion did not disturb his cordial friendship with La Fayette. At this time the latter applied for and obtained permission to go home on leave of absence. His departure was delayed for several weeks by a severe illness, which, according to his own account, had been caused in great measure by his excesses in wine.† Nevertheless, he was able to embark at Boston before the close of the year. His reception by his countrymen was warm, almost enthusiastic. “On arriving at Court,” says he, “I had the honour to be consulted by all the Ministers, and what is far better, embraced by all the ladies!” Whatever his influence might be from his high connexions, or from his General’s rank, it was exerted by him on behalf of his American friends. He zealously urged the Cabinet to send over the Atlantic both early and effective aid.

In the West Indies the intended attack on St. Lucia was made, and the island taken by the English.‡ They likewise took St. Pierre and Miquelon, while, on the other hand, the Marquis de Bouillé, the French Governor of Martinico, made himself master of Dominica.

But the newly kindled war between France and England was waged much nearer home. The command of the Channel fleet had been entrusted to Admiral Keppel; a choice that did honour both to him and to the Ministry, since Keppel, as a Member of Parliament, was a zealous opponent of Lord North. Under Keppel served Sir Hugh Palliser, like himself a good officer, but of different politics; one of the Lords of the Admiralty, and of course

\* To the President of the Congress, November 14. 1778.

† “Ayant veillé, bu, et travaillé beaucoup à Philadelphie. . . . Fêté partout avec empressement il se fortifiait de vin, de thé et de rhum, mais à Fishkill, huit milles du quartier général, il fallut céder à la violence d’une maladie inflammatoire.” (*Mémoires de ma main*, Corresp., vol. i. p. 61. ed. 1837.)

‡ A Narrative, by the Hon. Colin Lindsay, of the occupation and defence of St. Lucia, will be found in the “*Lives of the Lindsays*” (vol. iii. pp. 330—356.), a most pleasant well-written book, in which the pride of ancestry is made subservient to the diffusion of knowledge.

a supporter of Government in the House of Commons. When Keppel first arrived at Spithead, he found only six ships of the line ready for sea, but after the French Declaration of the 13th of March, there were the most active preparations in all the ports. The King himself repaired to Portsmouth to animate the officers, and held a levee on board the *Prince George*, the flag-ship of the Admiral. By unwearied exertion the number of ships of the line was within a few weeks increased to twenty. With this armament Keppel sailed from St. Helen's in the month of June. It was not long ere he fell in with two French frigates sent out to reconnoitre; the *Licorne* and the *Belle Poule*. In virtue of his full powers the Admiral decided on attacking them; thus, in fact, commencing the war. The *Licorne* he captured; the *Belle Poule* he drove to shore among the rocks. Next day, however, Keppel sailed away from the coast of France and retired into Portsmouth. For this sudden, and, as it seemed, precipitate retreat he was greatly censured by the public. As he alleged, in vindication, the papers of the *Licorne* had shown him that anchorage was prepared in Brest harbour for no less than thirty-two ships of the line—a force with which his own manifestly could not cope. It was answered that these papers might be fabricated on purpose to mislead him; and that in any case he ought not to have given orders for retreat without first calling a Council of War.

In July the Admiral put to sea once more. His fleet had been reinforced, but was still inferior in numbers to the French, which, under Count D'Orvilliers, had already sailed from Brest. The two fleets met off Ushant, where, on the 27th of the month, there ensued an engagement of three hours. The result was not decisive. Several hundred men were killed or wounded, and several ships damaged on either side; and the combatants were separated by a squall of wind and by the approach of night. Admiral Keppel had both made signals and sent orders to Sir Hugh Palliser to come up and renew the conflict, but Sir Hugh, whose own ship had suffered greatly, could not obey him. In the night Count D'Orvilliers steered back to Brest, and next morning, Admiral Keppel, finding pursuit in vain, set sail for Plymouth.

A nation like the British, long familiar with naval victory, could ill brook the news of a pitched battle, still less of an inglorious retreat. Keppel and Palliser finding themselves arraigned, began to cast blame upon each other. Sir Hugh commenced, far from discreetly, by publishing a vindication in the newspapers — a vindication which his chief, when required by letter, refused to confirm. The spark thus kindled was blown by the angry breath of partisans; each eager to claim and to support the Admiral of his own political opinions. No sooner had the two Houses met again in November, than the matter was keenly discussed. It is a remarkable feature of these times that the leading Admirals and Generals of the war were also for the most part Members of Parliament. Thus, throughout the winter and the spring of 1779, we find not only Admiral Keppel and Sir Hugh Palliser, but also Lord and Sir William Howe and General Burgoyne, able themselves to allege their grievances or defend their conduct. In some of these cases there were Committees of Inquiry, and examinations of witnesses, but in none any clear or positive Parliamentary result. These altercations, in their full details, could not fail to interest, because they inflamed, the party-spirit of the day; but a slight sketch of them may well suffice for the information of a later age.

Sir Hugh Palliser now brought forward charges against Keppel for misconduct and incapacity in the recent action. Upon these the Admiralty ordered a Court-Martial. But as Keppel was now in an ill state of health, an Act of Parliament was proposed by the Opposition, and allowed to pass by the Ministry, enabling the Court-Martial, contrary to the common rule of the service, to meet on shore. It did meet accordingly at Portsmouth. There Keppel was seen attended by many of his principal Opposition friends, as their Royal Highnesses of Gloucester and of Cumberland, the Duke of Richmond and the Marquis of Rockingham, Fox and Burke, and two young men, as yet unknown to fame, nor yet in Parliament, Sheridan and Erskine. It was an anxious time for all concerned. After thirty-two days' sitting, the Court came to an unanimous decision that the charges were malicious and ill founded, and that Keppel, far

from having sullied the honour of the service, had acted in all respects as became a judicious, brave, and experienced officer. By this time the tide of public feeling was running strongly in his favour. Gibbon writes as follows, in London, on the expected news of the acquittal:—"In a night or two we shall be in a blaze of illumination from the zeal of naval heroes, land patriots, and tallow-chandlers; the last are not the least sincere."\* The enthusiasm rose even higher than Gibbon had foreseen. For two successive nights were the cities of London and Westminster illuminated at the tidings of Keppel's triumph, whilst a lawless mob deemed they did him honour in breaking open the house of Sir Hugh Palliser, destroying its furniture, and burning Sir Hugh himself in effigy. The houses of Lord North and Lord George Germaine were likewise assailed, and their windows broken; and at the Admiralty the iron gates were forced from their hinges.

The popular excitement was revived a few days afterwards, when Keppel was presented with the freedom of the City, and went to dine with the Common Council at the London Tavern. At Charing Cross the mob insisted on taking the horses from his carriage and drawing him onwards by their own strength. His coachman at the same time found it necessary to relinquish the box; "in favour," says a contemporary, "of a number of Jack Tars, who swarmed about the carriage like bees round a hive."† Nor can it be said that this revulsion of feeling in behalf of the Admiral was confined to the capital alone. In the country villages "The Admiral Keppel" became a favourite sign; held equal, at the least, to the effigy of other Admirals, who, unlike Keppel, had had the opportunity of gaining some great victory, and doing their country some signal service.

In both Houses of Parliament a vote of thanks to the acquitted Admiral was moved and carried, with only one dissentient voice; this came from Mr. Strutt, a gentleman of Essex, grandfather of the present Lord Rayleigh.

\* Letter to Holroyd, February 6. 1779.

† Town and Country Magazine for 1779, as quoted in Keppel's Life, vol. ii. p. 209. ed. 1842

Sir Hugh Palliser felt keenly the reflection implied against himself by the recent decision of the Court Martial, as well as by the votes of Parliament. With high spirit he resigned, not only his employments, amounting to 4000*l.* a year, but also his seat in the House of Commons, and demanded a Court-Martial on himself. This new Court-Martial continued to sit for three and twenty days. At last they declared that the behaviour of Palliser had been in many respects exemplary and meritorious. They could not help thinking it was incumbent on him to have made known to the Commander-in-chief the disabled state of his own ship, but on no other point did they consider him chargeable with misconduct, and therefore upon the whole they acquitted him. But this acquittal did not at first by any means appease the rancour of the multitude.\*

The Ministers, though not perfectly satisfied with Keppel, had no intention of withdrawing him from the command of the Channel fleet. But Keppel had conceived the utmost resentment against them. He had by nature a haughty temper, or, according to the fine image which Burke applies to him, "it was a wild-stock of pride." He wrote a letter to the King, entreating that he might not be expected to go again to sea under men who had treated him with "so glaring an injustice." He also, as he tells us, took great umbrage at the expressions of a subsequent letter from the Board of Admiralty, although in that letter, as published, and as now before me, it is not easy to discover a single word or thought to give offence. Under the influence of feelings which, with all respect to him, we may consider overstrained, he invited and received directions to strike his flag; thus deeming himself justified in leaving the active service of his country at a time when it greatly needed men like him.†

\* An accomplished contemporary, on reviewing these transactions many years afterwards, observes of Sir Hugh Palliser: "Perhaps no man was ever more cruelly used by the public, through a virulent party-spirit." (Lord Sheffield, note to Gibbon's *Miscellaneous Works*, vol. ii. p. 228.)

† The Life of Admiral, afterwards Viscount, Keppel, has been written by his kinsman, the Hon. and Rev. Thomas Keppel, with care and perspicuity, but not without strong party and family bias.

Not merely Admirals and Captains took part in these discussions. The attack against Lord Sandwich was headed by Fox in the House of Commons. In his speeches he proceeded to the most violent extremes. The First Lord of the Admiralty, cried he, has driven from the service both Admiral Keppel and Lord Howe; he is a worse traitor to his country than even Jack the Painter! Fox even went the length of moving, in express terms, that Lord Sandwich might be dismissed from His Majesty's presence and councils for ever; and Lord Bristol renewed that motion in the House of Peers. Lord Sandwich found it necessary to remind his accusers that though he was solely responsible for the equipment, he was not solely, but jointly, responsible for the employment, of the naval force, which was decided in the Cabinet, and finally sanctioned by the King. The motions against him might be, and they were, rejected by large majorities; still, however, the invectives of the Opposition leaders could not fail to make a gradual impression on the public. Several officers of rank, besides Lord Keppel, declared that they would not serve under the present Ministers. Nor were such feelings of dissatisfaction confined to the highest class. Before the close of the Session symptoms, though happily suppressed, of mutiny had appeared on board the fleet in the Channel.

Symptoms of insubordination, though from another cause, showed themselves in Scotland also. Riots took place both at Edinburgh and at Glasgow in January and February of this year, against the Roman Catholics, real or reputed. Their houses were assailed, their furniture broken, their lives threatened, their persons insulted. At Edinburgh the popular indignation was more es-

For the Letter to the King, in March, 1779, as derived from Lord St. Vincent's MSS., see vol. ii. p. 221., and for the Letter from the Board of Admiralty, p. 227. Keppel was, beyond all doubt, a good officer and a highly honourable man, yet perhaps his fame with posterity will mainly rest on the sister arts of painting and poetry — on those two most noble portraits by Reynolds, the one inherited by Earl Fitzwilliam, the other purchased at Christie's for 500*l.* by the late Sir Robert Peel — and on that description of his character, rich with all the hues of imagery, and suggested by the former of those very pictures, in Burke's "Letter to a Noble Lord."



pecially directed by hand-bills against what was termed "that Pillar of Popery" — a new-built house, namely, in Leith Wynd, containing a room for Roman Catholic worship. The house was accordingly set on fire, and the inhabitants scarce escaped with their lives. In some of these cases the magistrates are accused of culpable remissness, as though their own sympathies were rather with the perpetrators than with the victims of the No Popery outrages. Soon afterwards, in the House of Commons, Wilkes inquired of the Lord Advocate, Henry Dundas, what had become of his promised Bill for the relief of the Roman Catholics north of Tweed. Dundas answered frankly and fairly that he had dropped it for the present at the request of the Roman Catholics themselves, who dreaded that it might become the handle of further persecution. Concessions like these to unreasonable clamour may be needful from the temper of the times, but even then they leave no party satisfied, and far from quenching they only add fuel to the flame. Throughout Scotland the Protestant Association and Corresponding Committees gained strength and confidence; and they elected for their President Lord George Gordon. Henceforth, then, the silly ravings of that young nobleman in the House of Commons became important on account of the tens of thousands of followers who, as he boasted, were ready at his call. One of his favourite topics was to declare, or to insinuate, that King George the Third was at heart a Papist! By his exertions a Protestant Association, with Corresponding Committees, was formed in England also, and of these, as of the Scottish, Lord George was chosen President. Great evils might be expected, and next year did ensue, from so turbulent a body joined to so weak a head. Looking then to this outbreak of fanaticism, both in Scotland and in England—beholding, likewise, the rising commercial discontents among the Irish, and the germ of their Volunteer Associations—it might be said at this juncture that there was no single province of the British empire, far or near, which did not afford just ground for most grave anxiety.

Early in the year the Government endeavoured to strengthen itself by the accession of what had been Lord

Chatham's party; Lord North himself to retire. An overture was made by Lord Weymouth and the Chancellor to the Duke of Grafton, Lord Shelburne, and Lord Camden. They answered in writing on the 3rd of February, that it was impossible for them to come into office unless the Marquis of Rockingham and the Duke of Richmond were first consulted. Upon this they heard nothing further from the Ministers. The Duke of Grafton adds in his Memoirs:—"This circumstance cemented the Opposition into a more solid body, and furnished the means, that Lord Camden and I improved, by persuading Lord Shelburne not to contest with Lord Rockingham the Treasury, in case a new administration was to be formed. Lord Shelburne yielded the point with a better grace than I had expected."

In another respect, however, the Government did gain strength by the great ascendancy which their new Chancellor, Lord Thurlow, had almost from the first acquired in the House of Peers. Few of their Lordships at that time could cope with that most vigorous intellect, or confront that awful frown. An ill-judged attempt by the Duke of Richmond to subvert his influence served, on the contrary, to establish and confirm it. The Duke took occasion to taunt him with the lowness of his birth, upon which Lord Thurlow, with admirable good sense and spirit, burst forth as follows:—"I am amazed at the attack the Noble Duke has made on me. Yes, my Lords," here he raised his voice to its loudest tones, "I am amazed at his Grace's speech. The Noble Duke cannot look before him, behind him, or on either side of him, without seeing some Noble Peer who owes his seat in this House to successful exertions in the profession to which I belong. Does he not feel that it is as honourable to owe it to these as to being the accident of an accident? To all these Noble Lords the language of the Noble Duke is as applicable and as insulting as it is to myself. But I do not fear to meet it single and alone. No one venerates the Peerage more than I do; but, my Lords, I must say that the Peerage solicited me, not I the Peerage. Nay, more I can say, and will say, that,—as a Peer of Parliament,—as Speaker of this Right Honourable House,—as Keeper of the Great

"Seal,—as Guardian of His Majesty's conscience,—as "Lord High Chancellor of England,—nay, even in that "character alone in which the Noble Duke would think "it an affront to be considered, as a MAN,—I am at this "moment as respectable,—I beg leave to add, I am at "this moment as much respected,—as the proudest Peer "I now look down upon!" All this time the Chancellor fixed full upon the Duke the look of Jove when he grasped the thunder. Mr. Charles Butler, who was an ear and eye witness to this speech, declares, that its effect was prodigious; investing, as it did, Lord Thurlow with a character of manly independence, it made him for a long time to come paramount among the Peers, and to the last a favourite with the people.\*

Before the close of the Session another Foreign Power had joined the league against us. This was Spain. For many months the most active preparations had been making in her ports and arsenals. For many months King George had foreseen, that in all probability a declaration of war would follow in the spring.† Still, however, the Spanish ambassador, at St. James's, the Marquis d'Almodovar, continued friendly in his language. He declared, that the most earnest wish of his Royal master was not only to remain at peace himself, but to promote peace among others. With this view he offered his mediation to both his good brothers of France and of England, now unhappily estranged. The answer of the British Government was clear and simple. Let France withdraw all assistance from America, and the King would be ready to re-establish amity. On the other hand, the French insisted that Great Britain should acknowledge the independence of their new American allies. To reconcile such jarring pretensions seemed no easy task. As an accommodating expedient, the King of Spain proposed a truce of twenty-five or thirty years, or for an

\* Writing from recollection, or by a slip of the pen, Mr. Butler appears to have confounded the Dukes of Grafton and of Richmond, both equally sprung from Charles the Second, or, in Thurlow's phrase, "the accident of an accident." Compare the *Reminiscences*, vol. i. p. 180., with the *Parl. Hist.*, vol. xx. p. 582., the date of the speech being June 14. 1779.

† Letter to Lord North, October 13. 1778.

indefinite term, during which a peace might be negotiated. This proposal, as plainly disadvantageous to us, we declined. An exchange of notes upon the subject was kept up through the winter, but led to no result. By that time the naval and military preparations of the Spaniards were completed. Then the Marquis d'Almodovar, to his own surprise, received some new instructions, in pursuance of which he quitted London without taking leave; first however, on the 16th of June delivering to Lord Weymouth a state-paper, amounting to a declaration of War. The King directed that copies of this Declaration should be laid before both Houses, stating, at the same time, in his Royal Message, that he firmly relied on the zeal and public spirit of his Parliament.

It was felt, however, by the principal politicians beyond the Channel, that there was something glaringly and manifestly false, nay, even almost ludicrous, in the pretended zeal of two despotic Monarchies for the new-born liberty of the American Republic. Other motives to justify their conduct against England must be found or framed. Accordingly, there was published at Madrid another and longer Manifesto, containing an elaborate statement of the grievances of Spain during the last few years, as violations of her territory in the Bay of Honduras, and various insults or interruptions to her trade. At Paris a similar Manifesto of wrongs on the part of France was put forth at nearly the same time. The last of these documents drew from the British Ministry an answer, not, indeed, official, but showing, with cogent reasons and in eloquent language, the ill-faith upon the other side; for this "Justifying Memorial," as it was termed, the pen of Gibbon was employed.

With this league of Foreign Powers against us,—with projects of invasion loudly vaunted and near impending,—it became needful to provide most vigorous measures for defence. It cannot be said that the Ministers, obstructed as they were by political opponents, showed themselves wanting in their duty at this crisis. They proposed and passed (though not without some curtailment in the Lords\*) an Act for augmenting the Militia. They

\* On this occasion of the Peers' amendments, Lord North said in the Commons: "He wished most heartily the whole Bill had been

had in readiness another and still more stringent measure, — to suspend for six months all exemptions from impressment into the Royal Navy; or, in fact, to give the Government during that period the power, at their discretion, to man the fleet even from classes heretofore held free, as apprentices or fishermen.\* This extraordinary measure, called for by the exigencies of the times, was brought forward in a no less extraordinary manner. On the night of the 23rd of June, at twenty minutes past twelve o'clock, and as the House of Commons was on the point of adjourning, Wedderburn, now Attorney-General, rose in his place, and, without any previous notice, moved for leave to bring in this Bill, with a retrospective effect from the 17th. While explaining its provisions he did not attempt to disguise its arbitrary character. He defended it on the ground of necessity, urging that, when the invasion of our shores was threatened by perfidious foes, it behoved us to remove all legal impediments in the way of calling every man to the aid of the State, — to hold out encouragement to the willing, and to compel the reluctant to join in the defence. He stated, that there were at Portsmouth six or eight ships of the line ready for sea, but lying useless for want of sailors; and that they could not be manned if the power of impressment continued to be clogged with common-law and statutable restrictions. "Will you, then," he asked, "continue these impediments? Will you submit to an inferiority at sea, — allow your men-of-war to rot in your harbours, — and trust the existence of this country to the fate of a battle on shore? So confident does the Government feel in the co-operation of Parliament on this occasion, that I do not scruple to tell you, that the unrestricted impressment which this Bill is to authorise has already begun, — that I make this motion at this late hour without notice for the purpose of rendering the measure effectual, and preventing any from evading it; — and that I hope, by

"suffered to stand; as it had not, he must take the remnant and pick up even the crumbs which fell from their Lordships' table." For this phrase he was keenly upbraided by Sir George Yonge, who called it an "abject humiliation." *Parl. Hist.*, vol. xx. p. 1016.

\* Act 19 Geo. III. c. 73. The whole Act is only of three clauses. (1853.)

“ the suspension of Standing Orders, it may to-morrow be  
“ carried through all its stages” Sir George Savile,  
and the other Members of the Opposition who happened  
to be present, though taken by surprise, raised every  
difficulty, and offered every obstruction in their power.  
“ It is reducing this House,” cried Sir George, “ to act as  
“ so many midnight conspirators, . . . coming like hired  
“ ruffians with poniards under their cloaks ! Methinks I  
“ hear the heart-felt shrieks of the miserable wife, or of  
“ the aged and helpless parent, entreating the midnight  
“ ruffians not to drag from them a tender husband, or a  
“ dutiful and beloved son ! ” Nevertheless, at one o’clock  
that night the Bill was brought in, and read a first and  
second time. On the morrow it was sent to the Lords,  
where, however, it gave rise to keen debates, and it did  
not receive the Royal Assent until the last day of the  
Session.\*

The Parliament was prorogued on the 3rd of July,  
but there was not the smallest slackening of the warlike  
preparations. On the 9th was issued a Royal Procla-  
mation charging all officers, civil or military, in the event  
of an invasion, to cause all horses, cattle, and provisions,  
to be driven from the coasts. A boom was drawn across  
the entrance of Plymouth Harbour. A sufficient force  
lined the batteries of Portsmouth. It was alleged by the  
party out of power that these equipments bore signal  
marks of hurry and confusion. It was said that at Ply-  
mouth there was no adequate supply of powder—that  
the balls did not fit the guns—that there were no hand-  
spikes or other small stores.—that even flints for the  
muskets were wanting. But most of these charges were  
strenuously denied on the part of Government; and it is  
difficult to discover the real truth amidst the conflict of  
respectable authorities. Thus we may observe the Duke  
of Richmond declare, in his place in Parliament, that he  
had himself gone down to examine Plymouth. There he

\* Lord Campbell’s *Lives of the Chancellors*, vol. vi. p. 127.  
(though in error as to the dates), and *Parl. Hist.*, vol. xx. p. 962. In  
the debate upon this Bill in the Peers, Lord Sandwich stated : “ The  
“ number of our seamen at present is 81,000, which, considering that  
“ we lost 18,000 of the seamen employed last war, by not having  
“ America, is surely a very considerable number.”



owned that he had found collected nearly 5000 of land-forces; but no more than thirty-six or thirty-eight invalids, as artillery-men, to mount the batteries and work two hundred guns. No sooner had the Duke sat down than the First Lord of the Admiralty rose, and with equal positiveness stated that at the time and place which his Grace had specified there had been upwards of 500 seamen on shore, well acquainted with the use of artillery, and quite ready to serve it if required.\*

With the land-forces, it appears to have been less easy to find fault. A large encampment had some time since been formed on Cox Heath, in front of Maidstone, comprising bodies of Militia, drawn from many counties. There, for instance, stood arrayed the Suffolk Militia, with the Duke of Grafton at their head. It might be objected to these men, that they had little discipline and no experience. But beyond all question they were resolute and eager; and had the enemy landed, would have done their duty. Through all the southern counties there arose a military spirit. It was shown, not merely in set speeches or on solemn occasions, but in the common and often ludicrous use of military phrases. As some evidence and token of that fact, let us not disdain even the jests of the play-wrights. Thus, in one small piece, to which the Camp at Cox Heath gave both subject and title, I find "Sir Harry Bouquet" complain:—"As I travelled down, the fellows at the turnpikes demanded the counter-sign of my servants, instead of the tickets! Then, when I got to Maidstone, I found the very waiters had got a smattering of tactics; for inquiring what I could have for dinner, a drill-waiter, after reviewing his bill of fare with the air of a Field Marshal, proposed an advanced party of soup and bouilli, to be followed by the main body of ham and chickens, flanked by a fricassée, and with a corps-de-reserve of sweetmeats!"†

\* Debate in the Lords on the Address, November 25. 1779. In corroboration of Lord Sandwich, see also the speech next day in the Commons of Admiral Lord Shuldhām, who had commanded at Plymouth at the time in question.

† The Camp, act ii. scene 3. This Play, though a mere trifle, or in the French phrase, a *pièce de circonstance*, came from no less a pen than Sheridan's.

Neither in this passage, nor in any other of my history, do I offer any apology for inserting details, even the most trivial, if they portray the feelings, the temper, or the manners of the time. But a more solid proof of the public spirit at this juncture is afforded by the state of public credit. It appears that, in this month of July, when so large a force was ranged on the opposite shores—when an invasion of our own was every day expected—the funds were never more than one per cent. below their rate in the January preceding.\* Both private gentlemen and public bodies (foremost among the latter the East India Company) entered into large subscriptions for raising troops, giving bounties to seamen, or equipping privateers. It was acknowledged by the Opposition that the Militia then in arms did not fall short of 50,000, and that the regular troops of various kinds within the kingdom were almost as many.† With truth might one of the Ministers declare that “the spirit of the nation does not shrink from the increase of its difficulties.” With equal truth might he say that “the King’s magnanimity is not to be shaken by the nearness of danger.”‡ His Majesty had determined, if the French should land, to put himself at the head of his armed subjects, animating them by his exertions and example.

On the other side the preparations for attack had been made upon a formidable scale. The French finances, till now on the verge of bankruptcy, had been brought to a more flourishing or, at least, more promising condition, since M. Necker, a rich and able banker from Geneva, had been named their Director-General. A French army, amounting probably to near 50,000 men, had been marched towards the Channel ports from Havre to St. Malo. Their advanced division was commanded by the Count de Rochambeau, and their main body by the Mareschal de Broglie; and their project for a landing

\* The lowest price of the three per cent. Consols, in January, 1779, was 60½; the lowest price in July, 1779, was 59½. Ann. Regist., p. 250. On the 20th of August, Keppel writes to Rockingham: “Would your Lordship believe it? the Stocks are something ‘better to-day!’”

† Speech of the Duke of Richmond in the House of Lords, November 25. 1779.

‡ Lord George Germaine to Sir Henry Clinton, August 28. 1779.

pointed to our southern shores. Having left the port of Brest, the French fleet, under D'Orvilliers, effected a junction with the Spanish; the whole force, thus combined, amounting to no less than sixty-six sail of the line, with a train of frigates and small ships. Never, since the days of the Armada, had so great a fleet of foemen rode the British Channel. Against these sixty-six sail of the line, Sir Charles Hardy, the successor in command to Keppel, had not, with every exertion, been able to bring together more than thirty-eight. He could not prevent the enemy from insulting the British coast, nor from pursuing him, first near the Scilly Isles, and then towards the straits of the Channel. Nevertheless he appears to have disposed his inferior numbers to the best advantage. He lost only one ship, the *Ardent*, and that by the error of her captain, who ventured out too far, mistaking the hostile fleet for our own. Sir Charles having drawn the enemy from before Plymouth, succeeded likewise in covering Spithead; and being also, in some measure, favoured by the easterly wind, he gained that greatest of all objects in defensive warfare—time. Both the French and Spanish ships had been too hastily equipped, and were not quite seaworthy. It was afterwards declared by Lord North, in the House of Commons, that had Sir Charles Hardy known then as well as he did afterwards the internal state of their fleet, he would have wished and earnestly sought an engagement, notwithstanding his own inferiority of force.

Meanwhile there had arisen a violent dissension between the two allied Admirals. The Spaniard wished, without delay, to land the invading army on the British shores;—the Frenchman thought it necessary, in the first place, to attack and defeat the British fleet. In the defective state of their own ships, the approaching equinoctial gales were dreaded; and a malignant distemper had broken out among the crews. Under these circumstances the Spanish commander declared, in a peremptory tone, to the French, that it had become necessary for him to relinquish the present enterprise, and return to the ports of his own country.\* D'Orvilliers had no choice

\* Statement of Count Florida Blanca, as cited in Coxe's *Kings of Spain*, vol. v p. 25. See also in my Appendix to this volume, an extract from the MS. *Memoirs of the Duke of Grafton*.

but to follow that example. He brought back, therefore, his own fleet into Brest, where, mortified at his recent failure, he resigned the command, and afterwards, it is said, withdrew for the remainder of his life into a convent.\* Thus for the time did all danger of invasion pass away. Thus, when the House of Commons met again, might the Prime Minister of England describe as follows, not unaptly, the proceedings of our enemies in the last campaign: — “They had fitted out a formidable fleet, they appeared upon our coasts, they talked big, threatened a great deal, did nothing, and retired. Their immense armaments were paraded to no purpose, and their millions spent in vain.”

At this trying time, the English commander, Sir Charles Hardy — a good and gallant seaman, though a little past his prime, — appears to have performed his duty well. It is painful to contrast his conduct with that of other Admirals, not less personally brave, but who deemed that they fulfilled a superior obligation or an unavoidable necessity by seceding from service, and remaining on shore — there to do nothing, except indeed to cavil and find fault with whatever was done by others. Through the month of July we find Keppel, from his park of Bagshot, in his letters to Lord Rockingham, inveigh against “want of capacity in the chief commander,” namely, his successor, Sir Charles Hardy; and observe that, “perhaps at this moment it (the British fleet) is bungling into action.”† Was Lord North — if I may quote him once again — was Lord North, I ask, far wrong when he compared Keppel himself to a gallant first-rate ship of war with all its sails set and streamers flying, but Keppel’s party friends to barnacles that cluster beneath it, and that clog its progress? Better, surely, at such a crisis, even to “bungle into action” than to keep aloof from it!

\* Amedée Renée, *Continuation de Sismondi* (p. 122. ed. 1844), a work that cannot, however, be commended for accuracy. What will an English reader say to the following *fact*? — “Il faut se rappeler que notre abaissement à nous, était le but de la politique de Chatham. Il faut se rappeler qu’il avait signé contre nous la terrible paix de 1763 !”

† *Life of Lord Keppel*, vol. ii. p. 245. ed. 1842.

The insult to the British coast by the combined fleets of France and Spain was less galling to the national pride than some much smaller transactions in the North. Paul Jones—in his birth a Scotchman, in his feelings a bitter enemy to his native land, in his career and conduct a mere adventurer, but no doubt a bold and hardy seaman—held at this period a commission in the American service. With his squadron of three ships and one armed brigantine, off the coast of Yorkshire, he attacked our Baltic fleet, convoyed by Captain Pearson in the *Serapis*, and Captain Piercy in the *Scarborough*. Both these ships he took, after a most desperate engagement; and though his own principal vessel, the *Bonhomme Richard*, which had been supplied by France, was so far damaged in the action that it sank two days afterwards, yet he carried his prizes safe into the ports of Holland. Paul Jones, with his remaining ships, next appeared in the Frith of Forth. Sir Walter Scott, then still a boy, was at Edinburgh on this occasion, and has vividly described the humiliation felt by the better spirits that the capital of Scotland should be threatened by what seemed to be three trifling sloops or brigs, scarce fit to have sacked a fishing village. But Edinburgh was not devoid of brave men to resist as well as feel. There chanced to be at hand Alexander Stuart of Invernahyle, one of the Stuarts of Appin, a veteran who, according to their phrase, had been “out in the “Forty Five,” and who now exulted in the prospect, as he said himself, “of drawing his claymore once again “before he died.” He offered to the magistrates, if broadswords and dirks could be obtained, to find as many Highlanders among the lower classes as would suffice to defend the town. The magistrates deliberated, but came to no decision on his scheme. As is added by Sir Walter Scott: “A steady and powerful west wind settled the “matter by sweeping Paul Jones and his vessels out of “the Frith of Forth.”\*

The war between the Great Powers now at issue was waged in various quarters of the globe. Earlier in the

\* See the Historical Introduction to *Waverley*, p. 102. revised ed. 1829. But two of Jones's ships were larger than Scott supposed.

year an ill-concerted attack of the French upon the Isle of Jersey was easily repelled, and only exposed to ridicule the swelling name of its projector — a Prince or Count de Nassau-Siegen. Further south the Spaniards lost no time in commencing, first, the blockade, and afterwards the siege of Gibraltar. On the coast of Africa the French took Senegal, but lost Goree. In the West Indies Count d'Estaing availed himself of the departure of his antagonist, Admiral Byron, who had sailed to escort our fleet of merchant-men to a certain distance on their homeward course. In his absence d'Estaing succeeded in reducing both St. Vincent and Granada. The return of Byron was delayed for some time by adverse winds and currents: when he did appear once more, he endeavoured to bring the French commander to a close and decisive action. This, however, by means of a timely retreat at night, d'Estaing was enabled to avoid. His next object was, in concert with the Americans, to wrest from us our recent conquest of Savannah. In the month of September, accordingly, he appeared off that place with his fleet, while General Lincoln brought him some land forces. They attempted to storm the town, attacking in two columns; but the British troops, headed by General Prevost, made a valiant defence, and beat back the assailants. Upon this the French fleet separated, a part steering again to the West Indies, while D'Estaing himself returned to his native shores. Not many characters more worthless appear on the page of history. Charles Hector, Count d'Estaing, began his career by breaking his parole, when a prisoner of war, to the English at Madras. Suitably, at least, Count d'Estaing closed his career with foul calumnies against his suffering Queen, the ill-fated Marie Antoinette — calumnies that yet did not save him, as he had hoped, from partaking the same guillotine.

“The campaign of 1779,” says a trans-Atlantic historian, “is remarkable for the feeble exertions of the Americans.”\* The same, though perhaps with a clearer reason for it, might be said of the English in that country. And first as to the Southern states In these

\* Ramsay, Hist., vol. ii. p. 124.



many loyalists came forth, and enrolled themselves in arms for the service of the Crown. The war was carried by them and by the Royal troops from Georgia into the Carolinas, and was waged in several small encounters with varying success. At New York Sir Henry Clinton's numbers were so far reduced, and his promised reinforcements so long in coming, that he could undertake no distant nor decisive object. He could only, in concert with the Admiral, Sir George Collier, send forth some smaller expeditions. One of these destroyed the Americans' stores and shipping at the mouth of the Chesapeake. Another, under Governor Tryon, with a body of loyalists, did cruel execution along the Connecticut coast. Another still afforded succour to a new British station in the bay of Penobscot, and scattered a flotilla from Massachusetts, which had been sent against it. The American crews and soldiers, driven to shore in a desert country, for the most part perished miserably in the woods. The British fleet was also employed by Sir Henry Clinton in withdrawing the British troops from Rhode Island, where they had been stationed so long and to so little purpose.

In an enterprise of greater importance, Sir Henry, together with Sir George, commanded in person. Ascending the Hudson above fifty miles, they reduced both Stony Point and Verplank's Neck, two strong posts on opposite sides of the river. But not many weeks elapsed ere Stony Point was surprised and retaken by the enemy. This exploit was performed with great skill and gallantry by the American General Wayne; and though on the news that Clinton was again advancing he could not retain his conquest, he was able to destroy the works and to carry off above 500 prisoners. Another surprise, conducted by Major Henry Lee, on the British garrison at Paulus Hook, opposite New York, proved almost equally successful. Here, however, the Americans withdrew too soon for their credit, if, as Clinton declares in his despatch, "their retreat was as disgraceful as their attack had been spirited and well-conducted."\*

\* Major Lee himself says, in a confidential letter to his friend President Reed: "In my report to General Washington, I passed the usual general compliments on the troops under my command. I

Through the winter and spring Washington had fixed his encampment at his former post of Middlebrook. In the summer his head-quarters were for the most part at West Point, where he superintended the completion of the works, but could achieve or direct no enterprise beyond those of Wayne and Henry Lee. His army, besides being reduced in numbers, was ill-paid, ill-fed, and ill-clothed ; and the Congress showed no alacrity to supply his wants. One cause of the remissness at this time, both in the Congress and the people of America, lay in the exaggerated expectations which they had formed from the French alliance. Believing that their new confederates would within a few weeks or months drive the British out of their country for them, they had cooled in their zeal and slackened in their efforts. Another and still more efficient cause lay in the fearful and wide-spread distress produced among them by the depreciation of their paper-money. That paper-money had gradually fallen to one-twentieth, to one-thirtieth, nay even in some cases to less than one-hundredth of its nominal value. But perhaps one practical instance may make this case the clearer. In December of this year, and in the State of Maryland, an English officer, one of the Convention troops, received an inn-keeper's bill, which in his Travels he has printed at full length, amounting in paper-money to 732*l.* and some shillings, and this bill he paid in gold with four guineas and a half ! \*

It is plain how grievous, nay almost intolerable, was this depreciation to every man in the public service. Thus writes Washington to a familiar friend :—“ Without  
“ some new measures what funds can stand the present  
“ expenses of the army ? And what officers can bear  
“ the weight of prices that every necessary article is now  
“ got to ? A rat, in the shape of a horse, is not to be  
“ bought at this time for less than two hundred pounds,  
“ nor a saddle under thirty or forty ; boots twenty, and  
“ shoes and other articles in like proportion. How is it  
“ possible, therefore, for officers to stand this without an

“ did not tell the world that near one half of my countrymen left  
“ me.” (*Life of Reed*, vol. ii. p. 126.)

\* *Anburey's Travels*, vol. ii. p. 492.

"increase of pay? And how is it possible to advance their pay when flour is selling at different places from five to fifteen pounds per hundred weight, hay from ten to thirty pounds, and beef and other essentials in this proportion?" The depreciation still proceeding, Washington, a few months afterwards, declares that "a waggon-load of money will now scarcely purchase a waggon-load of provisions!"\*

At the outset of this evil the Congress had shown but little foresight; in dealing with it now they showed as little skill. They had recourse to embargoes and confiscations, commercial restrictions of various kinds, and legislative limits upon prices; their measures, of course, aggravating the depreciation which they hoped to cure. They put forth, however, a public Address, declaring once more in the most solemn terms, that their faith was pledged for the ultimate redemption of their bills. Any idea or question to the contrary they treated with disdain: — "It is with great regret and reluctance," say they, "that we can prevail upon ourselves to take the least notice of a question which involves in it a doubt so injurious to the honour and dignity of America. . . . A bankrupt faithless Republic would be a novelty in the political world. . . . Let it never be said, that America had no sooner become independent than she became insolvent!"† These sentiments, so truly noble, so well deserving our highest admiration did they stand alone, preceded, we may observe, the public and final declaration of insolvency by not quite two years.

In the principal officer of Congress there had been a change some months before. Henry Laurens was succeeded as President by John Jay of New York. It was

\* Letters to Gouverneur Morris, October 4. 1778; and to the President of Congress, April 23. 1779.

† Address from the Congress to their Constituents, September 13. 1779. Gordon's History, vol. iii. p. 322. "On August 28. 1781," says Dr. Gordon in another place (vol. iv. p. 143.), "the Congress ordered the Board of War to make a sale of certain cannon and stores in Rhode Island *for specie only*. This may be considered as a declarative act on their part against the further circulation of a paper currency. It has indeed ceased by common consent."

a mere transitory appointment, since the decision of the majority was not, it seems, that Mr. Jay, or any one else, was the fittest man, but only that some Member from the great State of New York should now be chosen.\*

The new President was certainly both active and able, and several others such appear in the ranks of Congress; yet, looking to them as a whole, and confining the remark to this period, it is impossible not to be greatly struck at their ill-conduct and incapacity. On that point, although it would not be difficult to accumulate evidence from several of their warmest partisans, the testimony of that great and good man who commanded their armies may suffice. In the winter Washington had gone to concert his measures with them at Philadelphia, and he writes from thence as follows:—“If I were to be called upon to draw a picture of the times and of men from what I have seen, heard, and in part know, I should in one word say, that idleness, dissipation, and extravagance seem to have laid fast hold of them;—that speculation, peculation, and an insatiable thirst for riches seem to have got the better of every other consideration, and of almost every order of men;—that party disputes and personal quarrels are the great business of the day;—whilst the momentous concerns of an empire, a great and accumulating debt, ruined finances, depreciated money, and want of credit, which in its consequence is the want of every thing, are but secondary considerations, and postponed from day to day, and from week to week, as if our affairs wore the most promising aspect. . . . Our money is now sinking fifty per cent. a day in this city; and I shall not be surprised if in the course of a few months a total stop is put to the currency of it; and yet an assembly, a concert, a dinner, or supper, that will cost three or four hundred pounds, will not only take men off from acting in this business, but even from thinking of it; while a

\* “Mr. Laurens resigned yesterday. A great majority of Congress immediately determined that one of the New York delegates should succeed him. We held up General Schuyler, which seemed to be very agreeable. On account of his absence, Mr. Jay was prevailed on to take the chair.” Letter from Mr. Duane, a member of Congress to Governor Clinton, Dec. 10. 1778, as published in a note by Mr. Sparks.

"great part of the officers of our army, from absolute necessity, are quitting the service. . . . I have no resentments, nor do I mean to point at particular characters. This I can declare upon my honour, for I have every attention paid to me by Congress that I can possibly expect. . . . But such is the picture, which from my soul I believe to be a true one; and I confess to you that I feel more real distress, on account of the present appearances of things, than I have done at any one time since the commencement of the dispute."\*

In Washington's opinions these defects were produced in no slight degree by the erroneous policy at this time of the several States. Their system was, it seems, to retain their best men for their local offices or local Assemblies, while as to the central body, they either left their deputations vacant, or filled them with inferior persons. In those days, far unlike our own, the Congress resembled a Committee, or a Junta, much rather than a chamber for debate. The speeches, it is said, were all in the style of private conversation. There were never more than forty members present, often no more than twenty. These small numbers, however, by no means insured harmony, nor precluded violent and unseemly quarrels, rumours of which were not slow in passing the Atlantic. "For God's sake," — thus wrote La Fayette from France, — "For God's sake prevent the Congress from disputing loudly together. Nothing so much hurts the interest and reputation of America."† Thus the object of concealment, unless, perhaps, for private purposes, was most imperfectly attained, although in name, at least, the deliberations of Congress at this time were secret. Historically, even the Journal which they kept gives little light as to their true proceedings. An American gentleman, who has studied that document with care, laments that it is "painfully meagre, the object being apparently to record as little as possible."‡

The rival legislature of the mother-country met again

\* Letter to Benjamin Harrison, December 30. 1778. Writings, vol. vi. p. 151.

† Letter of La Fayette to Washington, June 12. 1779.

‡ Life of President Reed, by Mr. William Reed, vol. ii. p. 18.

this year on the 25th of November. Vehement debates immediately arose, and the spirits of the Opposition were revived by a division which at this time appeared among the Ministry. Lord Gower and Lord Weymouth, disapproving the continued warfare with America, and desiring coalition with some members of the other party, resigned their offices. "I feel," said Lord Gower, "the greatest gratitude for the many marks of Royal goodness which I have received, but I cannot think it the duty of a faithful servant to endeavour to preserve a system which must end in ruin to His Majesty and to the country." In his stead the Presidency of the Council was bestowed upon Lord Bathurst, and the Seal of Secretary upon Lord Hillsborough. A second Secretary of State was also at this time appointed, — Lord Stormont, lately ambassador at Paris, in place of Lord Suffolk, who had died some months before.

The secession of Lord Gower especially was felt by the Government as a heavy loss. Lord North, in a letter to the King, declares that he has done his utmost to dissuade his Noble colleague from his purpose. But the Prime Minister adds the following remarkable words: — "In the argument Lord North had certainly one disadvantage, which is that he holds in his heart, and has held for three years past, the same opinion with Lord Gower!" \*

Thus gloomily for England — with a formidable league against us on either side of the Atlantic — Scotland deeply stirred by the No Popery cry — Ireland ready to burst into flame — discord and contention more rife than ever in our councils and at the heart of the nation's strength — commenced, certainly not amidst congratulations, the New Year, 1780.

\* To the King, *circa* October, 1779. Appendix.



## CHAPTER LIX.

## VOYAGES OF DISCOVERY.

EXPEDITIONS in pursuit of treasure, or of conquest, under the lofty titles of Galleons or Armadas, have sometimes too much engrossed the attention of historians. Not less deserving of commemoration, and far more entitled to respect, are voyages undertaken for the enlightenment of savage nations or the extension of scientific knowledge.

For voyages like these, the long reign of George the Third is most deservedly renowned. They had been a favourite object with His Majesty ever since his accession to the Crown, and were only delayed until the conclusion of general peace. Next year after that peace were sent forth, on a cruise of discovery, towards the Magellanic Strait, two ships, under Commodore Byron — the same whose adventures as a midshipman, whose duties as an Admiral, have already been commemorated in these pages.\* His instructions, bearing date the 17th of June, 1764, commence as follows:—“Whereas nothing can “redound more to the honour of this nation as a maritime “power, to the dignity of the Crown of Great Britain, “and to the advancement of the trade and navigation “thereof, than to make discoveries of countries hitherto “unknown —.”

The main scope for such discoveries in the reign, and by the wish, of George the Third, was that vast ocean which, dividing Asia from America, extends from pole to pole. It was on the 25th of September, 1513, that this Ocean was first beheld by European eyes. On that day Vasco Nuñez, of Balboa, advancing with a party of Spaniards through the isthmus of Darien, and apprised

\* Look back to p. 39. of the third, and to p. 272. of the present volume.

by his Indian guides that the "Sea of the South" was near, commanded his men to halt, and climbed a mountain-summit alone. There, as the long-desired spectacle blessed his view, he fell upon his knees, and returned thanks to God; and when marching onwards they had come close upon the waves, he entered them, with his sword in one hand and his shield in the other, and exclaimed that he took possession of that sea in the name of his liege-lords, the Kings of Leon and Castille.\*

As a Spaniard first beheld, so did a Portuguese first navigate far from shore, the wide expanse of the Southern Seas. Ferdinand de Magalhaens, or, as we have termed him Magellan, a native of Portugal, having quitted his own country and entered the service of Castille, was sent by Cardinal Ximenes on a voyage of exploration, with a squadron of five ships. He coasted the shores of South America until he found and steered through the narrow and winding strait which ever since has borne his name. On the 27th of November, 1520, he emerged into the Southern Ocean, and sailed onwards many weeks in the same direction, without the sight of land; that Ocean, in the phrase of his historian, seeming to grow vaster and vaster every day.† So calm and free from storms did he find its waters that he gave it the appellation of Pacific, which, though with little reason, it still retains. At length, after many toils and dangers, his perseverance was rewarded and his fame secured by the discovery first of the Ladrões and afterwards of the Philippine Islands, where, however, he was unhappily killed in a skirmish with the natives.

It was not long ere, from the isthmus of Darien, the Spaniards spread their conquests along the eastern shores

\* Herrera, *Decada* I. lib. x. ch. i. and ii. It is curious to compare the demeanour of the Spaniard Nuñez with that of the Moor Akbeh several centuries before. This chief (who is commemorated by Florian in his *Précis Historique sur les Maures*, p. 31.), having extended his African conquests to the shores of the Atlantic, drew his sabre, and spurred his horse into the waves, crying out, "Dieu de Mahomet, tu le vois, sans cet élément qui m'arrête, j'irais chercher des nations nouvelles pour leur faire adorer ton nom!"

† *Aviendo Hernando de Magellaneo navegado por aquel Mar del Sur que parecia cada dia mas espacioso.* (Herrera, *Decada* III. lib. 1. c. 3.)

of the Pacific, to Peru and Chili on one side, and to California on the other. Nor did they leave altogether unexplored the wide range of sea before them. There was one voyage in 1595 from their new port of Callao under Alvaro Mendana ; there was another in 1606 from the same place, under Pedro de Quiros. From that time, however, as their greatness declined their ardour for discovery cooled. There was still, indeed, as we have seen in the account of Anson's expedition, a huge galleon laden with rich merchandise which once every year sailed across the Pacific from Acapulco to the Philippines. That vessel, however, seldom swerved far to the left or to the right from its appointed course, content to fulfil its mission, and with no aim beyond. Thus geographers perceived that within the bounds of the Pacific immense spaces yet remained unknown ; spaces within which many clusters of islands, or even whole continents, might be comprised. To seek out these might have seemed the more especial duty of that nation which had first discovered the New World, and which still possessed its fairest portion bounding the Pacific shores. But on Englishmen devolved the cost, the toil, the danger ; and to Englishmen the glory belongs.

The principal results which Commodore Byron attained in 1764 and 1765 were, beyond Cape Horn the discovery of several small islands, and on this side of it the fuller knowledge of the Falklands. On his return, his ship, the *Dolphin*, was immediately put into commission under Captain Wallis for another voyage. It was to be accompanied by a second and smaller vessel, the *Swallow*, under Captain Carteret. These two ships proceeded together till within sight of the South Seas, at the western entrance of the strait of Magellan, from whence they returned, each by a different course, to England. Captain Carteret fell in with a tiny cluster, to which he gave the name of Queen Charlotte's Islands. Captain Wallis was more fortunate ; in June 1767, he discovered the central and chief island, as it proved to be, of the whole Pacific. Not less loyal than Carteret, he named it "King George the Third's Island," although the native appellation Otaheite, or perhaps more truly, Tahiti, has since universally prevailed.

But all other explorers of this period are cast into the shade by the superior merit of Captain James Cook. Born in 1728, and the son of a day-labourer in Yorkshire, he commenced his maritime career as ship-boy to a collier. At the breaking out of war in 1755 he entered the Royal Navy. He had no assistance in his studies beyond what a few books and his own industry supplied; but he was determined to master the scientific as well as the practical part of his profession, and first read Euclid during a long winter on the coast of North America. He soon attracted the notice of Sir Hugh Palliser, and afterwards of Sir Charles Saunders. By the last commander he was employed on several most important services at the siege of Quebec. It was Cook who piloted the boats to the attack of Montmorency; it was Cook who convoyed the embarkation to the heights of Abraham. At the peace he was not left inactive; he was appointed to survey the Gulf of St. Lawrence and the coasts of Newfoundland.

It so chanced that at this period the astronomers of England were much intent on a Transit of the planet Venus over the sun's disk, which, according to their calculations, would happen in June, 1769. By means of the Transit, they expected to be able to determine with precision the distance of the sun; but for that purpose it would be necessary to make simultaneous observations from various quarters of the globe. One of the points required must fall within the bounds of the Pacific Ocean, and on Captain Wallis's report, there was none that appeared preferable to the newly-discovered isle of Otaheite. Even before Wallis's return, the Royal Society, as representing British science, had sent in a petition to the King, that he would order the required observation to be made in the South Seas. The request thus made was most willingly complied with. There was appointed for the purpose a good ship, first built for the coal trade, the *Endeavour*, and an excellent commander, Lieutenant James Cook.

The *Endeavour* sailed upon her voyage in August, 1768. She was victualled for eighteen months, and her complement of men and officers amounted in all to eighty-five. Besides these, there embarked Mr. Banks, then a

youth of twenty-four, afterwards Sir Joseph, and President of the Royal Society during three-and-forty years. Even as a boy Mr. Banks inherited a large estate in Lincolnshire; but ease and sloth, those besetting sins of early wealth, cast around him their meshes in vain. From the first he showed himself both eager and enlightened in the cause of science—those branches of science, above all, to which the name of Natural History is commonly applied. In pursuit of these his favourite objects he was liberal of expense, careless both of danger and fatigue. Already had he explored the wild coasts of Newfoundland and Labrador. On embarking with Captain Cook for a voyage round the world, he took with him, besides his secretary and four servants, two draughtsmen, the one to delineate landscapes and figures, and the other the objects in Natural History. He also engaged, as his companion, Dr. Solander, a distinguished botanist, by birth a countryman of Linnæus, but holding an appointment in the British Museum.\*

Touching on their way at Rio Janeiro, Captain Cook and his passengers were by no means cordially received. The Portuguese Viceroy listened with distrust to their assurances that they were going to observe an astronomical phenomenon from the Pacific. Of the Transit of Venus his Excellency had never heard, but said that he supposed it was the passing of the North Star through the South Pole! Mr. Banks and Dr. Solander being reported as philosophers, became especial objects of suspicion; they were prohibited from landing; and could only do so once, and in disguise.

Captain Cook sailed around Cape Horn, preferring that coast, though stormy, to the more dangerous shallows of Magellan. On Tierra del Fuego, Mr. Banks and Dr. Solander, with ten other persons, went on shore to make discoveries. It was now the month of January, the mid-

\* The Voyages of Byron, Wallis, Carteret, and the first of Cook, were ill compiled by Dr. Hawkesworth from the journals of the respective commanders and of Mr. Banks. (3 vols. London, 1773.) Cook's Second Voyage is related by himself (2 vols. London, 1777), and his Third partly by himself, but continued after his death by his gallant mess-mate, Captain King. (3 vols. London, 1784.) These are my principal materials for the present Chapter.

summer of those regions; yet, on the hills there were violent snowblasts and such severity of cold that two of the party perished. The rest, benighted as they were, owed their safe return in no small degree to the energy and presence of mind of Mr. Banks. They had no food besides a vulture which they happened to shoot, and which, equally divided among them, supplied each man with about three mouthfulls.

From *Tierra del Fuego*, Captain Cook pursued his voyage of some four thousand miles to *Otaheite*. "It is necessary," says a more recent voyager, "to sail over this great ocean to comprehend its immensity. Moving quickly onwards for weeks together, we meet with nothing but the same blue, profoundly deep ocean. Even within the archipelagoes, the islands are mere specks, and far distant from one another. Accustomed to look at maps drawn on a small scale, where dots, shadows, and names, are crowded together, we do not rightly judge how infinitely small the proportion of dry land is to the water of this vast expanse."\*

The principal observatory for the Transit was established by Cook on the northern cape of *Otaheite*, which, from thence, was called *Point Venus*. During the interval between Wallis's departure and Cook's arrival, the island had been visited by a French circumnavigator, M. de Bougainville, who applied a similar appellation from a wholly different train of ideas—he surnamed it a realm of love—*LA NOUVELLE CYTHÈRE*.

The residence of Cook at *Otaheite* during three whole months allowed him ample opportunities to observe the country and the people. Few regions of the earth appear so highly favoured by Nature. Nearly round the island, but at some distance from its shores, there extends a reef of coral rocks, within which the islanders may safely fish or disport themselves in their canoes. Within it there is also room and depth for any number of the largest ships. The glowing sunshine is tempered by the lofty peaks in the centre of the island, and by sea-breezes from a vast expanse on every side. The light soil, watered by many a sparkling rivulet from the mountains, brings forth, almost without culture, and in inexhaustible profusion,

\* Darwin's Journal, December 19. 1835.



the richest fruits for the use of man — as the cocoa-nut, the sugar-cane, the Chinese mulberry, and bananas of thirteen kinds. There was no European fruit nor grain of any sort. But the want of it was supplied by a rare and special gift of Providence to these South Sea islanders — the bread-fruit tree. This, in its trunk and branches, has been compared to an oak, in its foliage to a fig-tree; and the fruit is about the size and shape of a child's head. The rind being removed, there appears within a soft and spongy substance, white as snow, which, when divided into portions, and roasted, affords nearly the taste and the nourishment of bread. Thus, at Otaheite did a few turns before a fire supersede our manifold processes, which, from the tools that they require, are connected with so many processes more — of ploughing, sowing, harrowing, reaping, storing, thrashing, grinding, baking, — and, in late years at least, legislating !” \*

The race of men who were found inhabiting this island were, for the most part, tall, well-proportioned, and handsome; their complexion of a clear light olive. Their mild, intelligent looks, and their gentle manners, seemed far indeed removed from the common ferocity of savages. But they had the barbaric practice of drawing upon their bodies various patterns by small punctures — a practice which they, and we from them, denominate Tattooing. Their dress consisted of either cloth or matting; the former made from the bark of trees. In wearing it (but on that point civilised nations and barbarians well agree) they had rather more regard for fashion than for use; thus Cook observed of the chiefs, that whenever they came to visit him, they had folded round their loins as much cloth as would suffice to clothe a dozen people while the rest of their bodies was quite bare.

“It has been remarked,” says a recent traveller, “that “it requires only little habit to make a dark skin more “pleasing and natural to the eye of an European than his “own colour. A white man bathing by the side of an “Otaheitean was like a plant bleached by the gardener’s “art, compared with a fine dark-green one growing vigorously in the open fields.” †

\* See, however, as against the bread-fruit, the forcible remarks of Dr. Johnson; Boswell’s Life, under the date May 7. 1773.

† Darwin’s Journal, November 15. 1835.

To the Otaheiteans, the use of letters or the art of writing were utterly unknown. They had no metal whatever, all their tools being made of stone, shells, or bone. This was of the less importance to them, since they required no tillage, nor any but the lightest toil. It was observed of them, at this time, that to catch fish was their chief labour, and to eat it their chief luxury. Their houses, sufficient for such a climate, were no more than a thatch of palm leaves, raised a little way on poles, and open at all sides. They had no tame quadrupeds besides hogs and dogs. Both of these they cooked for food, by a process of small ovens and hot stones; "and in my opinion," adds Captain Wallis, "the meat is better in every respect than when it is dressed any other way."\* Having no vessel in which fluids could undergo the action of fire, and their climate being unvisited by frosts, they had as little idea that water could ever be made hot as that it could ever be made solid. At breakfast, on board the ship, a hissing tea-urn was to them an incomprehensible mystery; and one Otaheitean, who on that occasion slightly scalded his own hand, was gazed at by the rest with terror and amazement.

The longer residence of Captain Cook enabled him to become acquainted with their language. He describes it as soft and melodious and easy to pronounce. It bears little or no affinity to those of the Old World, but was found, though with great varieties of dialect, extending to New Zealand, and over many of the archipelagoes of the South Sea.

For their religion, the Otaheiteans believed in two great deities, or first beings, by whom all other beings were produced. The year was, they said, the daughter of these; the year begot the months, and the month begot the days. The stars, as they supposed, were partly the offspring of the first pair, but partly, also, had increased among themselves. They had an hereditary priesthood; and, according to their own avowal, the horrible practice of human sacrifices.† Most of their other rites related to their se-

\* Hawkesworth's Voyages, vol. i. p. 484. Captain Cook says the same. (vol. ii. p. 197.)

† Cook's Second Voyage, vol. i. p. 185. This does not seem to have been suspected during his first visit, nor yet during Captain Wallis's.

pulchral monuments, which they called Morais; their dead being neither burned, nor buried, nor yet embalmed, but, at least in some cases, laid out to decay above ground.

For their government they had one supreme and many subordinate chiefs. But the lesser peninsula (for Otaheite consists of two connected by a narrow neck of land) acknowledged a different sway. Between both sanguinary wars were sometimes waged, in which little mercy was shown even to women or children. Their chiefs, as their priests, were hereditary, of either sex, but of fluctuating authority. Thus, for example, when Captain Wallis first discovered the island, he saw a woman of middle age, named Oberea, whom, from the demeanour of the people towards her, he supposed to be their Queen; but during the later visits of Captain Cook Oberea had declined from her high estate, and was little regarded.

Such is the account of Otaheite when first seen by European eyes. It was transmitted by men both discerning and trustworthy. Yet, perhaps, we may reasonably suspect some errors, when we find how gross and glaring are those committed at home. How ill, even at the present day, do our nearest neighbours understand us! One French traveller, only a few years since, affirmed, that we are in the habit of receiving our letters upon dishes, and of opening them with tongs.\* One French historian, ascribing our intellectual vigour solely to our animal food, informs his readers, by way of illustration, that Shakspeare was a butcher by trade.†

A friendly intercourse and a system of barter sprung up at once between the people of Otaheite and each European ship. They brought provisions in plenty, and in return were most eager for axes and nails. But only a few hours sufficed to show the vices of their character. They were for the most part inveterate and incorrigible thieves. Even those who had received as free gifts many toys or tools could scarce be withheld from pilfering some

\* "Les Anglais se font servir sur des plats des lettres qu'ils prennent avec des pincettes." (Théophile Gautier, *Tra los Montes*, vol. ii. p. 98. ed. 1843.)

† "C'est de temps immémorial une race nourrie de chair. Leur plus grand homme, Shakspeare, fut d'abord un boucher." (Michelet, *Histoire de France*, vol. iv. p. 275. ed. 1837.)

more. On another still more essential subject they were still less to be restrained. Point Venus, where the ship's company, officers and sailors, often landed, might have been deemed the very shrine or dwelling-place of the heathen goddess. But among the Otaheiteans themselves the licentiousness was such as can find no parallel in any other age, or any other quarter of the globe. Among the Otaheiteans the men and women, at least of the richer class, were wont to form themselves into societies, or, as they might be aptly called, communities, in which infanticide became the order and the rule. These societies bore the name of *Arreoy*; and such was the state of feeling derived from them, that the term "bearer of children," which every where else is a title of honour among women, had grown to be at Otaheite a byword of reproach.

It is most strange to find that system, even though it might be limited to the richer class, still consistent with a swarming population. At his second visit, Captain Cook reckoned the number of the Otaheiteans at upwards of 200,000.\* Recent voyagers find the actual numbers so far less, that, even allowing for a large decrease in consequence of the diseases introduced by Europeans, they see grounds for controverting the earlier calculation. Be this as it may, the recent voyagers have on other points good tidings to tell. At Otaheite the labours of the Missionary have been active and unceasing. At Otaheite the Gospel has not been preached in vain. There are still, no doubt, as even in the longest settled Christian countries, many faults of conduct to deplore and to amend. But the old abominations have been utterly swept away, and a healthful system both of faith and practice has succeeded.

On leaving Otaheite, and at the distance of one or two days' sail, Cook discovered a cluster of six isles, to which he gave the name of Society Islands. They were inhabited, he found, by a kindred race, with nearly the same language and manners as at Otaheite. From hence, at the farther bounds of the vast Pacific, he explored the coast of New Zealand. These, as their appellation

\* Second Voyage, vol. i. p. 349. Compare his account with Captain Fitzroy's Voyages of the Beagle, vol. ii. p. 520.

denotes, were discovered by a Dutch voyager, namely Tasman, in 1642 ; yet neither he, nor any other since his time, had landed upon them. On more minute examination, Cook found the country to consist of two large islands ; and the strait between them, which he was the first to trace, has deservedly received his name. Cook went on shore in several places, and perceived the great natural advantages which now, thick-set as that region has become with thriving Colonies, bids fair to render it, at no distant period, the Britain of the Southern hemisphere. With the natives, and through their fault, not his own, he became involved in some hostilities. According to his observations, they were tall and well-made, more athletic and active than the men of Otaheite, and by no means destitute of good qualities, but too plainly, and by their own confession, cannibals.

The English Captain pursued his voyage to the shores of New Holland, — another discovery of the old Dutch navigators, — but to which, as to the former, they had given a random view rather than any scientific or close survey. Cook, with great care, explored the eastern coast, which he called New South Wales. One inlet, where Mr. Banks and Dr. Solander found plants in especial plenty, received the appellation of Botany Bay. Until that time it was matter of uncertainty whether New Holland might not form part of New Guinea ; but Cook now solved the doubt by steering between them. During that navigation he most narrowly escaped the peril of shipwreck. One night the vessel struck upon a hidden reef of coral. A formidable leak was sprung, and the crew set to work at the pumps ; but the ship remained firmly fixed, and beat against the rocks with so much violence, that even the seamen could not without the utmost difficulty keep upon their legs. Their sole chance was now to lighten the vessel ; accordingly, their guns upon the deck, their stone and iron ballast, casks, hoop-staves, oil-jars, decayed stores, and many other things, were with all expedition thrown overboard. Day broke, but only to show them the more clearly the horrors of their desolate condition ; the land at eight leagues' distance, and no intermediate islet, to afford them even a temporary refuge. Providentially the wind died

away: "had it blown hard," says Captain Cook, "we must have perished." Renewed exertions were now made to lighten the ship still further, every thing that it was possible to spare being cast into the sea. With incredible labour, and by the aid of the rising tide, at nine o'clock that evening the vessel righted.

But the danger was by no means overpast. The water rushed in through the leak, and the men contending against it began to lose, not strength only, but also heart and hope. So far spent were they, that at last none of them could work upon the pumps more than five or six minutes together, after which, being totally exhausted, they would fling themselves down upon the deck, while another party for the same short interval succeeded. Should their labour be remitted it seemed inevitable that the ship must sink; and they well knew that their boats were not sufficient to convey them all to shore. In that crisis it was feared that all command and subordination would be at an end, and that a fearful contest for the preference would ensue. Yet, perhaps, in such a case, the men left to perish in the waves might deserve less pity than the men who came to land. How could these provide any lasting or effectual defence against the natives? How subsist, where even nets and fire-arms could scarcely furnish them with food? What hope could they have for the future?—what hope that with their open boats they could ever quit these inhospitable shores or return to their own?

In this extremity one of the midshipmen, Monkhouse by name, went up to the Captain and proposed an expedient that he had once seen used on board a merchantship bound from Virginia to England. This expedient was called "fothering;" it consists in lightly stitching to an open sail a great quantity of oakum and wool, the sail being then hauled beneath the ship by ropes, when the oakum and wool are drawn in by the suction of the leak, and serve in some measure to plug it. Captain Cook lost no time in trying the experiment, and found it succeed so well, that the leak, instead of gaining upon three pumps, was easily kept under with one. In this manner it became possible to navigate the vessel towards a neighbouring harbour which had been discovered by the boats,



and which seemed to be convenient for the repairs required. For, as the writer of this voyage observes,—  
“In all the joy of our unexpected deliverance, we had  
“not forgot that at this time there was nothing but a  
“lock of wool between us and destruction.”\*

In that harbour, which he called Endeavour Bay, on the coast of New South Wales, Captain Cook remained above six weeks. There he and Mr. Banks saw for the first time that singular animal, till then unknown to Europeans, the kangaroo. There, also, they fell in with several parties of the natives, sometimes adorned with bones of birds through their noses, but wholly unclad, and grovelling in, perhaps, the very lowest stage of savage life. The repairs of the ship being now completed, so far as scanty means allowed, Cook attempted to resume his voyage. This proved an arduous task. So thick-set was the coast with shoals and reefs, that they formed a labyrinth far from easy to wind through. It was only after repeated failures, and at imminent risk, that the English Captain could work his vessel clear, and emerge into the open sea. From thence he directed his course to the Dutch settlements in Java, where the ship, which had once more become leaky, was put into dock and thoroughly re-fitted. Meanwhile the officers and men residing at Batavia suffered most severely from the marsh-fever of the place; several died, and only one person among them was altogether free from illness; this was the sail-maker, a man between seventy and eighty years of age, and who, strange though it seems, while on shore was a daily drunkard. The survivors continued their voyage homewards without further mischance or adventure, and in the month of June, 1771, came to anchor in the Downs.

The services of Captain Cook were acknowledged in the way that gallant seaman loved best; within a few months he was sent forth on another perilous voyage. This new expedition consisted of two ships,—the *Resolution*, under Cook, as the principal commander, and the *Adventure*, under Captain Furneaux. Its object was to complete the discovery of the Southern hemisphere, and

\* Hawkesworth's *Voyages*, vol. iii. p. 555.

to ascertain, so far as possible, the existence of a Southern Continent. On this service was Cook engaged for three years and three months. So extensive were his explorations, that, touching at the Cape of Good Hope on his homeward voyage, he computed, that since he had left that settlement on his course from England he had sailed above twenty thousand leagues. He had entered the Antarctic circle at several points, attaining a far higher southern latitude than any previous voyager, and not desisting until the ice, packed or floating, barred his way. The result was, that, although he saw strong reasons to suspect the existence of a Continent around the South Pole, he proved that its discovery could answer no useful purpose, since, if existing at all, it must be doomed to utter sterility, and covered with eternal snows.

During this voyage Captain Cook made several new discoveries in the Pacific, and revisited both Otaheite and the Society Islands. In these he found the people, as from the first, disposed to friendly intercourse and barter. The ship was often surrounded by canoes full of natives, who called out,—"TIRO, BOA, ATOI!" "I am your friend,—take my hog,—give me an axe!" So far, indeed, did their confidence extend, that a young man of note among them, named Omai, consented to embark with the strangers. He was not long in acquiring some knowledge of the English tongue, and, on reaching England, was presented by Lord Sandwich to the King at Kew. In the London circles his well-bred manners excited some surprise. "But you must remember, Sir," said Dr. Johnson, "that Omai has passed his time while in England only in the best company."\*

In all these island-specks on the vast Pacific Captain Cook had opportunity to observe strange varieties of savage life. In some there was from the first an amicable feeling, in others a succession of hostile attacks. In some the natives displayed an intelligent curiosity, in others a brutish indifference. Thus, at one of the New Hebrides which Cook discovered, a Chief, having come on board, looked on all around him with the utmost unconcern; nor did he take the least notice of any thing except a wooden

\* Boswell's Life, April 3. 1776.

sand-box, which he seemed to admire, and turned two or three times over in his hand! \* In nearly all places where intercourse was at all admitted the people were inveterate thieves. "It was hardly possible," writes Cook of Easter Isle, "to keep any thing in our pockets, not even what themselves had sold us; for they would watch every opportunity to snatch it from us, so that we sometimes bought the same thing two or three times over, and after all did not get it." †

After the observations of Cook in his first and second voyage, he might express a well-grounded hope that the Southern hemisphere was sufficiently explored. ‡ There still remained the task, however, of tracing through the Northern the coast of Asia and America, where they approach each other in the direction of Behring's Strait, and, if possible, effecting the converse of the North West passage, from the Pacific, namely, into the Atlantic Ocean. Thus would the circumnavigation of America be completed; thus might a new track be opened to the trade with China and Japan. With these views, and under the King's continued patronage, another and final expedition was planned. All men felt that Cook was by far the fittest person to conduct it, but all men felt likewise, that after his past labours it ought not to be proposed to him. He had been appointed to a lucrative command in Greenwich Hospital, where he might pass the remainder of his days in the enjoyment of well-earned ease and fame. Nevertheless, his advice was anxiously sought on every point, both in the framing of instructions and the choice of a commander. At last, to decide these questions, he was invited to a dinner at the house of Lord Sandwich, the other guests being only Sir Hugh Palliser, a Lord, and Mr. Stephens, the Secretary, of the Admiralty. In the conversation which ensued, these gentlemen descanted on the grandeur and dignity of the new design, and its results to navigation and science; until at last Captain Cook was so far wrought upon by their representations of the importance of the voyage, that he started from his

\* Second Voyage, vol. ii. p. 63.

† Ibid. vol. i. p. 279.

‡ Ibid. vol. ii. p. 239.

seat, and declared that he would conduct it himself. This was precisely what the party present had desired, and, perhaps, expected. His generous offer being without delay transmitted to the King, was joyfully accepted.\*

It was in July, 1776, twelve months after his return, that Captain Cook, departing on his last voyage, sailed from Plymouth Sound. He had embarked in his old ship the *Resolution*. To this, as on the last occasion, was adjoined a smaller vessel; it was now the *Discovery*, entrusted to Captain Charles Clarke, who had served under Cook in both the former voyages. With Cook there had also gone on board Omai, now returning to his native country, and enriched with many valuable presents, from the generosity of the King and of his private friends.

"It could not but occur to us," writes Cook, "as a singular and affecting circumstance, that at the very instant of our departure upon a voyage the object of which was to benefit Europe, by making fresh discoveries in North America, there should be the unhappy necessity of employing others of his Majesty's ships, and of conveying numerous bodies of his land forces, to secure the obedience of those parts of that continent which had been discovered and settled by our countrymen in the last century. On the 6th of July, a fleet of transports, consisting of sixty-two sail, bound to America, with the last division of the Hessian troops and some horse, were forced into Plymouth Sound by a strong north-west wind."† Yet the war against the Thirteen Colonies afforded at least one gratifying point of contact with the expedition of Cook. Many months afterwards, when that expedition was thought to be near its return, Dr. Franklin, as American Minister at Paris, took, greatly to his honour, some steps for its defence. He issued a letter to the commanders of American cruisers, enjoining them, if they should happen to fall in with these English ships, to do them no injury, but, on the contrary (here are his own words), to "afford Captain Cook and his people as common friends to mankind, all the assistance in your power."‡

\* *Encyc. Britann. sub voce Cook.*

† *Third Voyage, vol. i. p. 9.*

‡ Circular Letter, dated Passy, March 10. 1779. Franklin's

Cook, in the first instance, directed his course to the Cape, and from thence to New Zealand. Thence again he passed to an archipelago, several new points of which he had discovered in his former voyage, and given to the whole cluster the name of the Friendly Islands. A stay of nearly three months enabled him to become well acquainted with the people. Their language and manners were in some respects almost the same as at Otaheite. But they had more especially divers superstitious rites for secluding either persons or things from the offices of common life; and this, in their phrase, was to TABOO,—a word which, from Cook's description, may almost be said to have passed into the English tongue.

During the summer of 1777 Cook arrived at Otaheite and the Society Islands, where he had the satisfaction of restoring Omai to his friends. He also put on shore a bull and cows, a horse and mare, and other animals sent over by the King for the benefit of these islanders, and preserved with infinite care and pains throughout the voyage. On sailing from thence, he discovered a new and important archipelago, to which he gave the name of his patron and chief, Lord Sandwich. He then pursued his voyage to the north coast of America, which, at these high latitudes, he was the first to explore. He anchored for some weeks at Nootka's Sound; and in the spring of 1778 carried his discoveries beyond Behring's Straits, until within the Polar Circle he encountered, even in the midsummer months, a season far more rigorous than the winter he had passed. Still he struggled onwards through every toil and obstacle, but was unable to proceed beyond a headland, which he named Icy Cape.

At this point, where the sea, like the land, was but one frozen mass, the season also being far advanced, Cook desisted from his attempts to find a passage into the Atlantic, fully resolved, however, to renew his search in the ensuing year. Meanwhile he sailed back to the southward along the coasts of Kamtschatka, which he carefully explored. Returning to the Sandwich Islands,

Works, vol. v. p. 123. When in 1784 Cook's last Voyage appeared in print, a copy was sent to Dr. Franklin by His Majesty's orders, and was respectfully acknowledged. (vol. x. p. 125.)

he cast anchor in a bay which the islanders called by the uncouth name of Warakakooa. "No where in the course of my voyages," says Cook, "had I seen so numerous a body of people assembled at one place. For besides those who had come off to us in canoes, all the shore of the bay was covered with spectators, and many hundreds were swimming round the ships like shoals of fish."\*

With these people Captain Cook maintained during many weeks a friendly intercourse, and when he sailed from their country left them on good terms. Unhappily, soon after his departure he was compelled to return by a violent storm, which damaged one of his ships. During that second visit, the cutter of the *Discovery* being stolen by the natives, Cook went on shore with a party of nine or ten marines in hopes to regain it. He immediately marched into the village, where he was received with the usual marks of respect, the people prostrating themselves before him, and bringing their accustomed offerings of small hogs. He was still in parley with their Chief close to the sea-shore, when the news came that in another part of the bay, the boats' companies had engaged against some canoes and killed one of their principal men. Upon this a disorderly conflict soon arose. The marines and boats' crew appear to have fired without waiting for orders. This fire was answered by a volley of stones and a struggle hand to hand. The Captain himself then found it necessary to discharge both barrels of his gun, the second loaded with ball. His undaunted demeanour struck awe into the natives, and so long as he continued to face them it was observed that they offered him no violence. But in his anxiety to prevent further bloodshed, he turned round, calling to the boats to cease firing and pull in. Just then he was stabbed in the back, and fell with his face into the water. Of his little party, four were killed, and the survivors, some of them mortally wounded, could only save themselves by swimming to the boats.

Thus in February, 1779, died Captain James Cook ; a name deserving of an honourable place in the British

\* Third Voyage, vol. ii. p. 549.



annals. Self-taught, and rising from the lowest rank by his merits alone, temperate and hardy, clear-sighted and intrepid, he was ever foremost in the path of danger or of duty. His friends allow that he was prone to sudden starts of anger, yet these were tempered, and as it were disarmed, by a disposition the most kindly and humane.\*

The remains of Captain Cook could not be recovered for interment without great difficulty and much more of bloodshed. That melancholy rite being performed, and a reconciliation effected with the natives, the ships again departed from these islands. Captain Clarke, on whom the principal command had now devolved, applied himself with scarcely less of energy to the same object as his predecessor. Through the whole summer he made repeated but fruitless attempts to discover through the ice and snow an outlet to the East. Coming back from this service at the close of the season, he died along the coasts of Kamtschatka. His disease was consumption, beneath which he had pined for many months. "He knew," — these are the words of one of his gallant comrades, — "he knew that by delaying his return to a warmer climate he was giving up the only chance that remained for his recovery. Yet, careful and jealous to the last degree that a regard to his own situation should never bias his judgment to the prejudice of the public service, he persevered in the search of a passage till it was the opinion of every officer in both ships that it was impracticable."†

On the death of this high-minded man, the surviving officers, proceeding by way of Canton and the Cape, brought back the ships to England. The period of their absence was upwards of four years and two months. Such were the skill and judgment of Captain Cook in the precautions he had used, that there had not appeared the slightest symptom of the scurvy in either vessel during the whole voyage.

\* In the circumstances of Cook's death, as elsewhere, I follow Captain James King. (Third Voyage, vol. iii. pp. 40—46.) There are, however, several *Variantes* in the narrative of Mr. Samwell, surgeon of the Discovery.

† Third Voyage, vol. iii. (by Captain King), p. 281.

The efforts of the British Government at this period were not confined to the Pacific Ocean and to the Southern Hemisphere. The Northern also, and the coasts of the Atlantic, were in some degree explored. In 1773 Lord Mulgrave was sent with two ships to determine how far navigation might be practicable towards the North Pole. Lord Mulgrave showed both skill and courage in pursuing his object, but, like all his predecessors, was baffled by "the realm of frost." In 1776 and 1777 there were other expeditions into Baffin's Bay, less well conducted, by Lieutenant Pickersgill and Lieutenant Young. But, as it proved, the most important enterprise in that quarter was not undertaken by the Admiralty; it was due to a private Association. The Northern Indians, who came down to trade at Fort Prince of Wales, belonging to the Hudson's Bay Company, had brought to the knowledge of the English the existence of a distant river, which, from copper abounding near it, was called the Coppermine. The Company now resolved to send some competent person to explore the course of this river, and trace it to its termination. For that purpose they pitched on Samuel Hearne, a young gentleman in their service, who had been an officer in the navy, and had already made two shorter expeditions to the inland country.

Accordingly, in December, 1770, Mr. Hearne set forth on his journey. His guides and companions were a party of the Northern Indians; some of those various tribes which, without fixed habitations, rove along the dreary deserts or the frozen lakes of that immense tract of continent. Mr. Hearne found that he had little or no control over the party with which he travelled. They did not always pursue the straight or shortest course, and often halted as inclination or necessity might prompt, to supply themselves with food by the chase. It was the first time that any European had ever advanced nearly so far in that direction. Cheerfully bearing every hardship, and encountering every toil, during more than twelve hundred miles of march, Mr. Hearne at length, in July, 1771, reached the expected place on the Coppermine River. He gazed upon it with no small surprise. The Indians at the Fort, with the usual exaggeration of uneducated tribes, had described the stream as likely to be navigable

for ships; Mr. Hearne perceived, on the contrary, that, besides its shoals and falls, it could scarcely bear one of their own canoes.

At that spot the English traveller witnessed, without being able to prevent, an act of atrocious cruelty in his Indian guides. They surprised by night, and put to death, without mercy, a party of poor Esquimaux along the stream. Mr. Hearne felt more especial pity for one girl who, as it chanced, was butchered at his side, and who, in her dying convulsions, grasped his knees. He earnestly entreated her life, but the Indians only answered him with ridicule, asking if he wanted an Esquimaux wife. "Nor," adds Mr. Hearne, "did they pay the "smallest regard to the shrieks and agony of the poor "wretch, who was twining round their spears like an "eel!"\* A few leagues onwards, still following the northern course of the stream, Mr. Hearne found the rise and fall of tides, and gazed with eager eyes upon the open sea.

At a later period, full eighteen years afterwards, the same track of discovery still further to the westward was explored by another hardy wanderer, Alexander Mackenzie. Like Hearne, he was engaged in the service of a trading company; like Cook, he had not the advantages of early education. But his energy and perseverance were displayed even before his toilsome journey had commenced. In his own words:—"I felt myself deficient in the sciences of astronomy and navigation; I "did not hesitate, therefore, to undertake a winter's "voyage to England to acquire them. That object being "accomplished, I returned."

In the prosecution of his perilous enterprise, Mr. Mackenzie derived some aid not merely from the native tribes of Indians, but from the Europeans who had freely joined them. "It is not necessary for me," thus he writes, "to examine the cause, but experience proves that it "requires much less time for a civilised people to deviate "into the manners and customs of savage life, than for "savages to rise into a state of civilisation." Such was

\* Journey to the Northern Ocean by Samuel Hearne, p. 154. ed 1795

the case with not a few of the French or English men who accompanied the natives on their hunting and trading parties; for so attached did they become to the Indian mode of life, as to lose all relish for their former habits, and their native homes. Hence they derived the name of COUREURS DES BOIS, and became a ready link of intercourse, of great use to the merchant employed in the fur trade, as well as to the traveller. And strange as it may seem to us to find men thus eager to discard civilisation and embrace a savage life, yet the same strong impulse has been constantly observed among the South Sea Islands, where it needs the utmost vigilance of the commanders to prevent desertion of the crews.

A march of no slight risk or labour brought Mr. Mackenzie and his guides towards the centre of the Northern Continent to Chepewyan on the south side of the "Lake of the Hills." There, in a canoe constructed of birch bark, he commenced his voyage of discovery. First he steered into and around another vast expanse which is called the "Great Slave Lake," and which even then, in the month of June, was for the most part frozen over. Here he suffered from another hardship, which at first sight might be deemed scarcely consistent with the former. "We were pestered," says he "by musquitoes, though in "a great measure surrounded by ice." From this lake he entered a river flowing northward, which received from him, and which still retains, his own name of Mackenzie. "The current," he remarks, "is very strong, and the "banks are covered with large quantities of burned wood, "lying on the ground, and young poplar trees that have "sprung up since the fire that destroyed the larger wood. "It is a very curious and extraordinary circumstance "that land covered with spruce pine and white birch, "when laid waste by fire, should subsequently produce "nothing but poplars where none of that species of tree "were previously to be found."\*

Proceeding on his voyage, Mackenzie allowed himself during the day to be carried forward by the stream, but at night he always landed and set up his tents until the dawn justly dreading the perils of falls and rapids as well

\* Mackenzie's Journal, June 19. and 29. 1789.

as many others in a tract of country as yet wholly new to Europeans. The Indians of his party provided food by fishing, shooting, or hunting: this, however, was not his sole reliance, as he had some store in his canoe. Large, indeed, were the daily supplies which he required. According to his own account, his party, consisting of ten men and four women, had, within a period of six days, consumed two rein-deer, four swans, forty-five geese, and a considerable quantity of fish! "I have always observed," adds Mackenzie, "that the North-men possessed very hearty appetites, but they were very much exceeded by those with me, since we entered this river; and I should really have thought it absolute gluttony in my people, if my own appetite had not increased in a similar proportion." Among the fish which they caught most frequently was one well known to the Canadians, but still retaining among them the name which the first discoverers had given it: POISSON INCONNU.

At length in July, 1789, after many hundred miles of navigation, the courageous perseverance of Mackenzie was rewarded, as he saw by degrees the river widen, and the Arctic Sea expand. So thickly was the ice piled along the coasts as to leave him for some time still uncertain whether that were indeed the ocean to which his course had tended; and his doubts were first dispelled by the sudden appearance in the current of huge white masses, which he discovered to be a troop of whales.\* Toilsome as had been his progress, he found his return a matter of still far more labour and fatigue, since his canoe had to mount against a strong stream, which required constant exertion of paddling or of tracking with a line on shore. In one part of the river, where the breadth from bank to bank did not exceed three hundred yards, the depth of water was no less than fifty fathoms.†

\* "The part of them which appeared above the water was altogether white. . . . At first we supposed them to be pieces of ice." (Journal, July 14. 1789.)

† This narrative of the voyage of Mackenzie, as also of another undertaken by him three years afterwards to the western coast of North America, was published by himself in 1801. A good summary of both appears in the Annual Register for that year. (pp. 545—558.)

It may be said with truth, both of the voyage of Mackenzie and the journey of Hearne, that as regarding the Arctic Circle, no discoveries in that age tended more to the progress of discovery in ours. Proving as they did that the North American Continent by no means, as some persons had supposed, extended to the Pole, but was bounded by a Polar Sea, they revived the hopes of a North-west passage, and animated the exertions of a Parry or a Franklin. In these men the spirit of Cook and Hearne was in our own day worthily renewed. But to these men that spirit was not confined. In every part of the world that spirit has been displayed. Not merely in the Tropic islands, where safe within their coral-reefs, the islanders may listen to the outer Ocean's roaring surges — not merely in the realm of eternal winter, where even the restless surges are bound fast by frost — but through the burning sands of Africa, the marshy jungles of Siam, or the tangled brush-woods of New South Wales — wherever the keel can glide, the sledge draw, or the camel carry, or the unassisted human footstep tread — in every clime, and on every soil, — wherever in the quest of knowledge or of conquest there is glory to be won, — there the indomitable spirit of Anglo-Saxon enterprise has overcome most obstacles, and is striving against all.



## CHAPTER LX.

## LITERATURE AND ART.

IT seems no unfair pretension that some place in History, however humble, should be allotted to Historians. Those who have successfully chronicled great deeds, ought not themselves to be left unchronicled. On this supposition the Literature of the period now before us may deserve especial notice, since, so far as historical writers are concerned, it was in truth our Golden Era. Besides several of less distinction, as Dr. Watson and Lord Lyttleton, it comprised the three eminent names of Hume, Robertson, and Gibbon.

Of these three it is remarkable that two were natives of Mid-Lothian. David Hume was born at Edinburgh in 1711. He first attracted public favour — such was then the temper of the times — by a volume of sceptical Essays. These, if they did not induce, at least did not prevent, the choice which the Faculty of Advocates made of him for their Librarian. In that office he received little or no emolument, but had at his command a large and excellent collection of books, which suggested to him the design of writing the History of England. He commenced with the accession of the House of Stuart; and in 1754 published his first volume, continuing the narrative to the death of Charles the First. His volume was in quarto; which, till within these forty years, was the more common form of publication, both for Histories and Poems. At present a smaller size is so universally preferred, that, as a popular writer of our own day remarks, the remains of a quarto, if discovered in a future age, may create no less astonishment than the remains of a Mammoth!

In his expectations of success, Hume at first was greatly disappointed. His tendency to palliate the errors of the Stuarts, or to lament their fate, raised a general

cry of reproach against him. That might be borne, but it was far more mortifying to observe that after the first ebullitions of anger, the volume seemed to sink into oblivion. The publisher, Mr. Miller, told him that in a twelvemonth he had sold only forty-five copies of it. "I scarcely indeed," says Hume, "heard of one man in the three kingdoms considerable for rank or letters that could endure the book. I must only except the Primate of England, Dr. Herring, and the Primate of Ireland, Dr. Stone, which seemed two odd exceptions. These dignified prelates separately sent me a message not to be discouraged." \*

Two more years enabled Hume to come forth with a second volume, and bring down his narrative to the Revolution. This volume was better received, and as he declares, not only rose itself, but served to buoy up its unfortunate brother. It served also to give fresh spirit and a wider scope to his labours. In 1759 he published his *History of the House of Tudor*. Next he applied himself to finish in two volumes the remaining first part of English History, which he gave to the public in 1761. Thus in Hume's narrative the earlier portions were the last composed. To go backwards is scarce less difficult in writing than in walking; and it is no small proof of his merit and ability as an historian, to have overcome that difficulty of his composition, and left it hardly perceptible to a common reader.

The volumes of 1761 were the last from Hume. In 1763 he was appointed Secretary to the Earl of Hertford, as ambassador at Paris, and in 1767 became Under-Secretary of State to General Conway. But in 1769 he finally retired to his native city, where, during his seven remaining years of life, he enjoyed in uninterrupted ease the fame and affluence which his works had brought him.

William Robertson was born at Borthwick near Edinburgh, in 1721, and became a Divine of the Scottish Church. In February 1759 he published his *History of Scotland*, comprising mainly the events of Queen Mary's reign. The best judges promptly acknowledged the great merits of that performance. Thus writes Lord

\* "My own Life," p. xi.

Chesterfield: "There is a History lately come out, written by one Robertson, a Scotchman, which for clearness, purity and dignity of style, I will not scruple to compare with the best historians extant, not excepting Davila, Guicciardini, and perhaps Livy. A second edition is already published and bought up."\*

The literary fame of Robertson obtained for him several marks of the Royal favour; and in 1762 he was chosen Principal of the University of Edinburgh. Thenceforth his life, almost destitute of incident, pursued the even tenor of its way. His History of the reign of the Emperor Charles the Fifth, in the form of three quarto volumes, appeared in 1769. Two volumes on the History of America followed in 1777. The latter work had been designed as a mere appendage of the former; to contain only the discoveries or the conquests of the Spaniards at the time of Charles the Fifth. By degrees the plan of Robertson was extended to the whole of the New World. But he was led to contract it again in some degree by the outbreak of the war between Great Britain and her colonies, a period which justly seemed to him ill-adapted for the calm investigation of their rise and progress.

A South-Sea Director was the grandfather, and a country gentleman the father, of Edward Gibbon. He was born at Putney in the year 1737. An early impulse led him to the Church of Rome, which on more mature reflection he abandoned. Like Hume, he has left behind him some interesting Memoirs of his own career, and in these we may trace, how (also in conformity with Hume's example) he settled at last in utter disbelief of every form of Christianity. We find him quote with approbation the sardonic remark of Bayle: "I am most truly a Protestant, for I protest indifferently against all systems and all sects."† From Magdalen College, which was closed against the Romanist convert, he was sent by his father to Lausanne, where he passed some studious and not unhappy years. He returned to England in the spring of 1758, and six years afterwards travelled through Italy, but amidst all change of scene retained his taste

Letter to his son, April 16. 1759,

† Memoirs, p. 70. ed. 1814.

for reading. After several lesser attempts in literature, and more than one abortive scheme, he applied himself in earnest to his great work, the *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. But his studies at his house in Bentinck Street (and here again he stands in parallel with Hume) were broken through by a call to public life. "Yesterday morning," thus in 1774 he writes to Mr. Holroyd, "about half an hour after seven, as I was destroying an army of Barbarians, I heard a double rap at the door, and my friend Mr. Eliot was soon introduced. After some idle conversation he told me, that if I was desirous of being in Parliament, he had an independent Seat very much at my service."\* The Seat to which Gibbon here refers with the ironical epithet of "independent," was for Liskeard, a borough at that time wholly under the influence of the House of Eliot. The historian having expressed his acquiescence, and concluded his arrangement, was accordingly elected that same year. He became a steady supporter of Lord North through all the American contest, and in 1779, by the friendship of Wedderburn, then Attorney-General, he was appointed one of the Lords of Trade. But in spite of his own hopes and wishes, he never spoke, nor even attempted to speak, in Parliament. "I am still a mute," says he: "it is more tremendous than I imagined. The great speakers fill me with despair, and the bad ones with terror."† After three years of salary and silence, the abolition of the Board of Trade of course drew down Gibbon in its fall. The negotiations for peace opened to him a new prospect, and he expressed to Lord Chancellor Thurlow his desire to be employed in one of their subordinate posts. The office to which he more especially aspired was the same that Hume had filled, the Secretaryship to the Embassy at Paris. But the influence of Mr. Fox in the Coalition Ministry prevailed in favour of another candidate. Even previous to the decision, Gibbon was intent upon a different scheme, and was casting a wistful look towards the shores of the Leman Lake, his early and beloved abode. His official disappointment

\* Letter, September 10. 1774.

† Letter to Holroyd, February 25. 1775.

fixed his wavering thoughts, and he relinquished London and Parliamentary attendance for Lausanne and the prosecution of his History. Of that great work three volumes were already published: the first in 1775, the second and third together in 1781. The public had done him ready justice. They admired the extent and accuracy of his reading, the stately march of his sentences, the lucid order of his narrative. With equal reason they resented his insidious attacks, and, worse still, his bitter sneers, on the faith which they professed.

As Gibbon's first three volumes were written in London, so were his three last at Lausanne. He has in his own Memoirs faithfully recorded the times, both of the earliest germ and of the final completion, of his immortal work. It was, he says, at Rome, on the 15th of October, 1764, as he sat musing amidst the ruins of the Capitol, and while the barefooted friars were singing Vespers in the Temple of Jupiter, that the idea of writing the decline and fall of the city first started to his mind. It was on the night of the 27th of June, 1787, that he wrote the last lines of the last page in the summer house of his garden at Lausanne.

With all its faults, and chief among them its malevolence (for it deserves no milder name) to Christianity, the Decline and Fall is probably the greatest historical performance in the English language. It has been translated into every other principal European tongue; and even such men as M. Guizot have not disdained to be among its commentators. In no age or country perhaps has any historian drawn from so great a number and variety of sources, or combined in a more eminent degree erudition with genius. Next in order of merit among ours may be placed Hume's History of England. So delightful is the style, so graceful and easy the narrative, so large the amount of information condensed in a brief space, that it ever has maintained—and we may venture to predict ever will maintain—its ground. In vain have later critics and gainsayers pointed out, not unsuccessfully, the manifold errors it contains; errors in part arising from haste or inaccurate knowledge, but in part, not without suspicion of wilful purpose and design. As an instance of the former may be mentioned that Hume personifies the Papal

authority in the twelfth century by the Triple Crown, and speaks of the Pontiff at that period as launching his thunders from the Vatican; the fact being, that at the time in question the Papal Crown was not yet Triple, nor the Vatican the Papal abode.\* The latter is of course a far graver charge. One strong example of it may be found in the enumeration of the works produced by King Alfred, or under his direction; from which list Hume has omitted every one of the numerous translations, and other works which bear in any degree upon Revealed Religion.

Such errors, but especially those of the former class, have caused some over-zealous antiquaries to deny altogether the great merit of Hume and his compeers. When, in 1836, the House of Commons appointed a Committee of inquiry into the Record Commission, one Member, Mr. Pusey, asked one witness, Sir Harris Nicolas: "Are you of opinion that we have at present no accurate and 'complete history of this country?" To which Sir Harris answered: "I am of opinion that we have no 'History of England deserving of the name."† Yet with all respect to the memory of that learned and laborious explorer of antiquity, we may affirm, that did his principles prevail, were our early annals written mainly by the aid of Rolls and Deeds, or rather of that portion of them, which with great difficulty not long since was rescued from the rats‡; the result would scarce, to any eyes, seem satisfactory. We may fear that this publication would ill reward the zeal and diligence which prompted it; and, like all the former publications of the Record Commissioners, remain unread, a burden seldom lessening

\* See the Quarterly Review, No. cxlvi. pp. 560. and 579. The able article from which I am quoting bears the title, "Hume and his 'Influence upon History," and is commonly ascribed to Sir Francis Palgrave.

† Minutes of Evidence, Q. 3966.

‡ In the same Minutes of Evidence (Q. 4590.) see the statement of Mr. Henry Cole as to the condition at that time of one of the Record depositories:—"Six or seven perfect skeletons of rats were found embedded (in the Rolls); bones of these vermin were generally distributed throughout the mass, and a dog was employed in 'hunting the live ones!"

Et divina Opici rodebant carmina mures!



on the shelves of the weary publisher. The pages ill employed on such materials would bear no more resemblance to the pages of a Livy or Sismondi, than does a quarry to a palace, or a skeleton to a man. With such a "publication," the public in reality would have no concern. The public would still prefer, and be right in preferring, the form and spirit of History to its dry bones.

It is true indeed that there are other deficiencies in Hume besides that of parchment deeds. Books of high historical importance did not come forth until after his narrative was written. They came forth, it may be said, partly on account of his narrative,—on account of that increasing zeal for historical inquiry which followed in its train. Thus Domesday Book, the great landmark of the Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman times, is now familiar to every student of that period. In the Days of Hume it was, if not unknown, yet for every practical purpose inaccessible. It was kept in the Chapter House at Westminster, under the guard of lock and key, and the edifice itself was seldom to be entered. Should any obstinate inquirer nevertheless persist in his desire to consult the treasure, he was liable to a penalty (for so it may be termed) of 13s. 4d. for each inspection. To give another instance from a period six centuries later, there is certainly no memorial that throws more light on the Court and government of Charles the Second than Pepys's Diary. But when Hume wrote, that Diary was still a sealed book; secured, it might seem, even more strongly than by bolts and bars, through its own especial and as yet undiscovered cypher.

Deficiencies of this kind, though of course no blame to the historian, are no doubt a blemish to the history. In that respect, the writers since the days of Hume enjoy a great advantage over him. Why then, in spite of that great advantage on their side, does Hume still maintain the foremost place? In part, but in part only, from the excellences of his style. Those excellences are the more remarkable since that style was formed upon a principle or maxim open to much question. For in one passage of his history, Hume has incidentally observed: "That mixture of French which is at present to be found in the English tongue, composes the greatest and best part

“of our language.”\* Few, if any critics, I apprehend, would now deny that the preference is due far rather to the Saxon roots. “He,” says a great writer of our own day, second to none in the mastery of English composition; “he, who uses a Latin or a French phrase where a pure old English word does as well, ought to be hung, drawn, and quartered for high treason against his mother tongue.”† The principle of Hume might seem to lead almost unavoidably to a choice of words, elegant perhaps, and expressive, but in a high degree artificial and elaborate — a choice of words like that of Dr. Johnson, or at best like that of Gibbon. Yet, strange to say, in the case of Hume himself, it led to what Gibbon most justly terms the “careless inimitable beauties” of his style.

But the superiority of Hume does not rest on style alone. The late Mr. John Allen, an acute and learned critic, wholly opposed in politics to that historian, nevertheless observes of him: “In vain shall we look elsewhere for those general and comprehensive views, — that sagacity and judgment, — those masterly lessons of political wisdom, — that profound knowledge of human nature, — that calm philosophy and dispassionate balancing of human opinions, which delight and instruct us in the pages of Hume.”‡ Such praise, though not without some considerable drawbacks and exceptions, is confirmed by the voice of an enlightened people during a long period of years. The perusal of his narrative, upon the whole, is found to afford so much both of pleasure and instruction, that, in all probability, it will never cease to be the common guide and hand-book of our history until the Revolution; the student, however, not neglecting those invaluable lights which later writers, and none more than Mr. Hallam, have collaterally brought to bear upon the subject.

The attacks upon Revealed Religion in the Essays of Hume, and in the History of Gibbon, were, it is well

\* Chapter iv. William the Conqueror.

† Letter of Mr. Southey to Mr. William Taylor of Norwich, February 14. 1803.

‡ Edinburgh Review, No. lxxxiii. p. 3. See nearly to the same effect a passage in the Fifth Lecture of Professor Smyth, vol. i. p. 126.

known, only parts of one great plan, — only branches of that evil tree which at this period overshadowed the whole Northern Continent of Europe. A sect — if so it can be called where every thing was doubted and nothing taught — arrogating to itself the title of Philosophy, and, with Voltaire for its patriarch, or high-priest, at Ferney, numbered proselytes at every Court from Petersburg to Paris. With very few and not very distinguished exceptions, the whole Literature of those countries was in its hands or under its control. At Berlin, the King himself was among its most zealous votaries, and employed some of those hours of leisure which were left him by the cares of war or sovereignty, in aping the style of the annotators upon Holy Writ, and composing, after the manner of Dom Calmet, some mock comments upon the nursery-tale of Blue Beard! In the Southern states of Europe, the progress of that sect was arrested, not by argument and reason, but rather through the authority of the governments and the ignorance of the governed. There the most sacred truths came to be classed with despotism and misrule, because they were maintained by the same means. There the grossest impostures continued to be practised on the people. Of these one remarkable instance, touching the King of Prussia, may be given. The priests in Italy regarded with much displeasure the career of Frederick; his example might be dangerous if it could be thought that so many victories and conquests had been gained by an unbeliever, or even by a heretic. Accordingly they devised a tale explaining his successes entirely to their own satisfaction. Goethe in his youthful wanderings relates how on one occasion he travelled from Bologna through the Apennines in company with a Captain of the Papal army. "Tell me," asked this officer, "may we trust what we hear from our priests respecting your Frederick the Great? Is it true that he holds the Catholic faith, but has obtained from the Pope a dispensation to conceal it? We know that he never visits any of your Protestant Churches, but we are further told that he has a subterranean chapel beneath his palace, where he offers up his devotions day by day, with a heart full of anguish, grieving that he cannot venture to avow in public our holy religion; for doubtless if he

“ did, his Prussians, who are all furious heretics, would strike him dead upon the spot. Tell me, is all this really true ? ” Goethe answered only as became a prudent traveller in the Pope’s dominions, that since these were deep mysteries of state, no one was precisely informed respecting them.\*

Looking then to the intellectual condition of Europe at this time, we find a melancholy scene — scepticism on the one side, and superstition on the other. In England the taint of the new philosophers was far less than in France or Germany, yet still their influence may be traced to no small extent, both on its literature and on its society. So early as 1753, the veteran patriot Sir John Barnard could exclaim in the House of Commons : “ At present it really seems to be the fashion for a man to declare himself of “ no religion.”† We may observe in Lord Chesterfield’s Letters to his Son, that even where the recommendations are most laudable, they are seldom, if ever, urged on lofty grounds. So great was the vogue of precepts delivered in that tone, that these Letters passed through no less than four editions in one year. In the case of Hume’s Essays, or of Gibbon’s History, we may view with some surprise not merely the boldness of their attacks, but how little that boldness appears to have affected their fame or fortunes. Even where they did provoke disapprobation, it was sometimes far more timidly and faintly than might have been supposed. Take the instance of Dr. Robertson. He was a leading Divine of the Scottish Church. He was the Principal of an important University. He was, there is no reason to doubt, a conscientious and religious man. He had no such familiar friendship with Gibbon as to warp his judgment. Yet when Gibbon’s first volume appeared, we find Dr. Robertson write of it in such terms as these : “ I hope the book will be as successful “ as it deserves to be. I have not yet read the two last “ chapters (on the Progress of Christianity), but am sorry, “ from what I have heard of them, that he has taken such

\* See Goethe’s Travels in Italy in 1786. (*Werke*, p. 180. ed. 1830.)

† Parl. Hist. vol. xiv. p. 1389.

“a tone in them as will give great offence and hurt the  
“sale of the book.”\*

If then it be asked, who first in England at this period breasted the waves and stemmed the tide of infidelity—who, enlisting wit and eloquence together with argument and learning on the side of Revealed Religion, first turned the literary current in its favour, and mainly prepared the reaction which succeeded: that praise seems most justly to belong to Dr. Samuel Johnson. Religion was to him no mere lip-service nor cold formality: he was mindful of it in his social hours as much as in his graver lucubrations: and he brought to it, not merely erudition such as few indeed possessed, but the weight of the highest character and the respect which even his enemies could not deny him. It may be said of him, that, though not in Orders, he did the Church of England better service than most of those who at that listless era ate her bread.

The sayings of Dr. Johnson in his social hours have become familiar to us from his *Life* by Boswell—certainly by common consent, one of the most delightful books in our language. In that book the folly of the author forms a constant foil to the wit and wisdom which he records, and greatly adds to their effect. It was an acute remark of Mr. Burke—a remark which the public opinion has since confirmed, but which most assuredly the author of *Rasselas* little dreamed of—that Johnson appears far greater in Boswell’s pages than in his own. The reason is that in the accounts of his private converse we have his admirable sense and shrewdness expressed in clear, plain terms, whilst in his prose writings we find him too often adopt on system a style artificially and elaborately bad—a style far more Latin than English—a style that easily may be, and that often has been, mimicked—a style that, according to his own favourite choice of words, would be called tumid, grandiloquent, and sesquipedalian.

Besides, the gratitude due to Dr. Johnson as the steadfast and able champion of the Christian Church, there is another point of view in which his character most justly

\* Letter to Mr. Strahan, dated Edinburgh College, March 15. 1776, and published in Gibbon’s Correspondence.

claims respect. No man at any period has more worthily upheld the dignity of Literature. When first he began to write, he had to struggle with all the bitterness of poverty. There were nights when he had no resting-place to lay his head. There were days when he had no money to buy food. Several of his early notes to Mr. Cave, the bookseller, bear appended to his name the mournful word IMPRANSUS. Once when Mr. Harte, the biographer of Gustavus Adolphus, was the guest of Mr. Cave, he observed that a plateful of the dinner was sent behind a screen; this, it seems, was for Johnson, who had been ashamed to join the company in his threadbare clothes. Yet through all these difficulties the "retired and uncourtly scholar,"—for thus he describes himself\*,—never swerved from the path of principle, nor was once betrayed into any mean or dishonourable action. Still did he hold fast his Opposition politics. Still did he assert his manly independence. His worst enemies might accuse him of churlishness and rudeness, but certainly never of flattery or fawning. His letter to Lord Chesterfield, in 1755, proves how sternly, upon the smallest provocation, real or imagined, he would thrust aside the hand of patronage. When at last, by no hand besides his own, he had secured both bread and fame—when he found his society courted, and his ascendancy acknowledged—when the bounty of the Crown, unsought and unexpected, had raised him into affluence—he showed the remembrance of his past condition by the most generous relief of other men's distress. "He loved the poor," says his friend Mrs. Thrale, "as I never yet saw any one else love them, with an earnest desire to make them happy. In pursuance of these principles," continues the same lady, "he nursed whole nests of people in his house, where the lame, the blind, the sick, and the sorrowful, found a sure retreat." And when in those days Johnson communed with the great, he did not indeed omit that civil deference of manner which he deemed their due, but he felt that now he met them at least on equal if not on superior terms; and made them respect in him both the inborn pride of genius, and the well-earned dignity of learning.

\* Letter to Lord Chesterfield, February 7. 1755.



There is yet another aspect in which Dr. Johnson may be regarded; as belonging to a literary circle, of which he was the main prop and stay. In conjunction with Sir Joshua Reynolds, he had formed a small, but well-selected knot of friends, which, proudly, without any distinctive epithet, was called, or called itself, *THE CLUB*. It has continued in regular succession, and with no sign of languor or decay, to the present year, preserving in three large folio volumes, authentic annals of its course. Certainly in Dr. Johnson's times at least, it exercised a considerable influence on the literature and public opinion of the day. The year of its foundation was 1764, and the number of original members only nine. That number they increased by degrees to between thirty and forty. They met at first for suppers, but towards 1772, agreed that instead of supping they would dine together once in every fortnight during the Session of Parliament; and such the general rule has since remained. The dinner-hour at that period was, we find, half-past four. The first meeting, however, recorded in their books was not till the 7th of April, 1775, at the Turk's Head, in Gerard Street. When some years afterwards that tavern was closed, they removed to another, but have now for upwards of half a century held their meetings at the Thatched House, St. James's Street. They have no permanent officer besides their Treasurer (at present the Dean of St. Paul's), the Chair being taken by all the members in rotation according to the alphabetical order of their names, and each member being bound by no engagement or necessity to send excuses, but free to the last moment to come or stay away at his pleasure.

Some slight "Curiosities of Literature" may be gleaned from the records of "the Club." Since 1832, all the members present are wont, before they separate, to subscribe their names, but in previous years it was the presiding member only; and on one occasion, the 23rd of April, 1793, when Boswell filled the chair, his signature appears most unlike his usual one, sprawling in blotted zig-zags across the page, and clearly denoting one of those Bacchanalian excesses (confined, let us hope, to him singly) such as he relates of himself in the isle of

Skye.\* In contrast with this too convivial scene, may be mentioned one of solitary grandeur. On December 13. 1825, the Earl of Liverpool being then Prime Minister, resolved to dine at the Club. By a singular chance, no other member happened to form the same purpose for that day, and thus Lord Liverpool passed the evening entirely alone. It appears from the books that the Prime Minister summoned to his aid one bottle of Madeira, of which, however, we may be sure that, according to his usual custom, he took but a very moderate share. This,—as a veteran and much respected member writes to me,—“was the day of the great run on the London Bankers, when Mr. Huskisson said that the whole financial transactions of England were within half an hour of being reduced to barter; and the Prime Minister of England being the only man who dined at the Club on that day is one of the most singular events that I know of in personal history.”†

Among the original members of the Club, when formed in 1764, were Mr. Burke and Dr. Goldsmith. Among those who joined it within the next twenty years, the span of Johnson's life, were Fox, Sheridan and Windham, Adam Smith and Gibbon, Bishop Percy, and Sir William Scott. To these were added other persons of far less eminence, but of cultivated minds and pleasant manners, able both to call forth and to appreciate the genius of the rest. Such, for example, was Henry Viscount Palmerston, who died in 1802; a man known in the sphere of politics, and deserving also to be known in the sphere of poetry.‡

\* “A third bowl (of punch) was made, and that, too, was finished; . . . but of what passed I have no recollection with any accuracy. It was near five in the morning when I got to bed. I awaked at noon with a severe head-ache. About one Dr. Johnson came into my room and accosted me,—‘What, drunk yet?’” (Tour to the Hebrides, Sept. 1773.)

† Letter dated February 4. 1852. In another communication the same gentleman adds: “I think there was but one instance in which only two attended at the Club,—Hookham Frere and Lord Holland.”

‡ His epitaph on his first wife, who had died of a decline in 1769, is printed in the Annual Register for 1777, but without his name. It thus commences:—

Such was Topham Beauclerk, a man of wit and taste. Such also was Boswell, whose biography of Johnson contains several most spirited and life-like descriptions of the meetings which he had attended. "As we close his book," says an accomplished critic, "the club-room is before us." The principle was then and is still, to combine, so far as possible, men of every profession and of every party. Not that the Club has always and invariably done itself honour, either in those whom it has rejected or in those whom it has chosen. A distinguished poet was black-balled in March, 1803. A distinguished statesman was black-balled in April, 1818. One or two examples of injudicious selection might be as readily adduced. Yet upon the whole, the character of the Club has been worthily maintained. Such minds as that of Burke, or that of Johnson, do not indeed appear at every period, and ages may ensue before we look upon their like again; but still, giving due weight to that consideration for the present time, a member of the Club will have little cause to complain of the degeneracy of mankind so long as he enjoys the high privilege of sharing in the converse of Mr. Hallam and Mr. Macaulay, Dean Milman and Bishop Wilberforce, Dr. Holland and Monsieur Van de Weyer, Lord Lansdowne and Lord Aberdeen.

Dr. Goldsmith, the contemporary and friend of Dr. Johnson, seemed a very different person to those who met him at the Club, or in society, and to those who read his books. In the latter we find the most admirable humour blended with tenderness and grace. Such productions as his "Vicar of Wakefield," or "Deserted Village," have wound themselves around the inmost chords of English feeling. In conversation, on the contrary, he seemed to

"Whoe'er like me with trembling anguish brings  
"His heart's whole treasure to fair Bristol's springs;  
"Whoe'er like me, to soothe disease and pain,  
"Shall pour those salutary springs in vain;  
"Condemned like me to hear the faint reply,  
"To mark the fading cheek, the sinking eye,  
"From the chill'd brow to wipe the damps of death,  
"And watch in dumb despair the shortening breath;  
"If chance directs him to this artless line,  
"Let the sad mourner know his pangs were mine!"

lose both his presence of mind and his powers of language; while an irritable vanity, ever deeming itself slighted or aggrieved, left him open to many a charge of fretfulness and folly. He would repine because a puppet-show was regarded in his company; he would strut around the room to exhibit on all sides, and to the best advantage, his new bloom-coloured coat. "No man," said Dr. Johnson, "was more foolish when he had not a pen in his hand." Yet on some rare occasions, Johnson himself might feel the keen edge of his unpremeditated wit. Thus, one day, as they chanced to be discussing the composition of fables, Goldsmith cried, with equal truth and aptness, "Why, Dr. Johnson, this is not so easy as you seem to think; for, if you had to write a fable upon fishes, you would make all your little fishes talk like whales!"\*

As poets it may be said, both of Johnson and of Goldsmith, that they belonged to the school of Pope. Not that men of so much genius could ever be mere imitators. The poetry of each has distinctive signs of its own; that of Johnson being marked especially by vigour and strong sense, and that of Goldsmith by sweetness and grace. Still, however, not merely they, but nearly all the writers of verse at that period, appear to have mainly kept in view the model of the Bard of Twickenham. The common notion seemed to be, that those who deviated from his standard were worthy only of a place in his *Dunciad*. Few, or none, could catch his spirit, but many adopt his metre or ape his correctness. The tribe of his copyists grew by repetition feebler and feebler, and lower and lower, until it sunk at last to the depth of Mr. Hayley. To this taste or temper of the age there were two most especial exceptions, in the case of Gray and the case of Cowper.

Gray, as the inmate of a hall at Cambridge, as one seldom absent from the schools, might well have been forgiven for adhering implicitly to the common models. Yet his strain of the Welsh Bard, and his snatches from

\* Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, vol. iii. p. 274. ed. 1839. A few more such instances are drawn out in array by the friendly zeal of Mr. Prior in his valuable biography of Goldsmith, vol. ii. p. 479.

the Runic, show with how bold a flight he could soar into the open sky. It is needless to praise where there are none to disapprove. It is striking, however, to observe the beauty of that stanza which he expunged from his "Elegy on a Country Churchyard;"\* so that it might almost be said, that even the leavings of Gray are superior to the finished compositions of other men. Again, when we reflect how frequently the invasion of the Roman Empire by the Barbaric tribes has engaged the pen of other writers from Jornandes down to Gibbon, it is worthy of note that so much of eloquence and imagery should remain to be compressed by this poet within the narrow compass of four lines.†

The Life of Cowper, as Mr. Southey with feeling and fidelity portrays it, is one of the most painful in our literary annals. Genius was to him a fatal and an evil gift. His sensitive frame of mind, and his spirits broken since his boyhood, sunk him into melancholy, and sometimes into madness. His circumstances gave him little cause for either. He had advantages of birth, and might have had advantages of fortune. He was grand-nephew of the Chancellor and Earl of that name. He was trained in a conveyancer's office, and fitted for promotion in the law. Through the influence of his family he soon obtained a lucrative and easy clerkship in the House of Lords. But the mere prospect of having to raise his voice in public drove him to utter distraction and attempts at suicide. He resigned his office, and after a long blank interval of

- \* " Here scattered oft, the earliest of the year,
- " By hands unseen, are showers of violets found,
- " The redbreast loves to build and warble here,
- " And little footsteps lightly print the ground."

" I wonder that Gray could have the heart to omit it," says Lord Byron in his Diary, February 27. 1821.

- † " With grim delight the brood of winter view
- " A brighter day, and heavens of azure hue,
- " Scent the new fragrance of the breathing rose,
- " And quaff the pendent vintage as it grows !"

I was told by Sir Robert Peel that he was consulted by another eminent statesman on his design (from which there was some difficulty in dissuading him) of quoting these noble lines in the House of Commons as applied to the Russian invasion of France in 1814.

frenzy, betook himself to the retired village of Olney. There he had no further tie to public life, beyond at intervals his warm sympathy to the far different careers of his old schoolfellow, Warren Hastings, and of his old brother clerk, Lord Thurlow. There, at other times, the rigour of his Calvinistic tenets on Predestination and Free Will overwhelmed him with perplexity and anguish. His chosen and constant associate was Mrs. Unwin, a widowed lady much older than himself, and growing blind,—a lady whose knitting-needles have been made immortal by his pen. Such, indeed, were his power of description and felicity of language, that even the most trivial objects drew life and colour from his touch. In his pages the training of three tame hares, or the building of a frame for cucumbers, excite a warmer interest than many accounts compiled by other writers of great battles deciding the fate of empires. In his pages the sluggish waters of the Ouse,—the floating lilies which he stooped to gather from them,—the poplars in whose shade he sat, and over whose fall he mourned,—rise before us as though we had known and loved them too. As Cowper himself declares, “My descriptions are all from nature, not one of them second-handed. My delineations of the heart are “from my own experience, not one of them borrowed “from books.”\* He could not, indeed, like poets of the highest order,—like Milton, for example, or like Dante,—imagine or body forth what he never felt or saw; but no writer of any age excels him in dealing with the daily realities of life. We might thence, perhaps, conclude, that the minds principally conversant with such realities, and slightly trained to flights of fancy, would be those to rank him highest. But this is only another form of words for expressing deserved success with by far the greater numbers of mankind. “The Task,” which appeared in 1785, raised its author by one bound to be the most popular poet of his age.

The period which is now before us was distinguished by the rise of British art, and the foundation of the Royal Academy. Of the principal portrait-painters in England, during the two preceding generations, Sir Peter

\* See his *Life* by Southey, vol. ii. p. 184.



Lely and Sir Godfrey Kneller, it is remarkable that both were natives of Germany. The principal sculptors then amongst us were Rysbrack and Roubiliac, the former a Fleming, and the latter a Frenchman. But in the early years of George the Third we may point with especial pride to the name of Joshua Reynolds. He was born in 1723 at Plympton in Devonshire. His father and his grandfather also were clergymen of the Church of England, but left him little other patrimony besides his genius. That genius almost from his boyhood impelled him to the pursuit of art. He repaired to London, and became the pupil of Hudson, no great portrait-painter, yet still the best of his day in England. The first of his own portraits which attracted even the smallest degree of public notice was of Captain Hamilton, whose son became the first Marquis of Abercorn: this portrait he painted in 1746.

Three years later he went to pursue his studies at Rome, where we find him speak as follows of himself:—  
 “I felt my ignorance, and stood abashed. All the indigested notions of painting which I had brought with me from England, where the art was in the lowest state it had ever been in (it could not, indeed, be lower), were to be totally done away, and eradicated from my mind. It was necessary, as is expressed on a very solemn occasion, that I should become ‘as a little child.’” He owns that at first sight the works of Raphael at the Vatican gave him little pleasure. But this he had the wisdom to ascribe at once to the true cause,—to no deficiencies in that great Master, but solely to his own. In a short time, he says, a new taste and new perceptions began to dawn upon him, and he found that he could measure the progress of his own improvement by the growth of his admiration for Raphael.\* He adds these remarkable words:—“Having since that period frequently revolved this subject in my mind, I am now clearly of opinion that a relish for the higher excellences of art is an acquired taste, which no man ever

\* Similar to this, but less just perhaps, is the rule in the study of eloquence which Quintilian laid down: “Ille se profecisse sciat, cui Cicero valde placebit.” (Instit. lib. x. c. i.)

“possessed without long cultivation, and great labour and “attention.”\*

On returning to England, in 1752, he took a house in London, and applied himself most assiduously to the pursuit of his profession. His advancing fame was shown (the test is a sordid but a sure one) by his advancing profits. In 1758, we find his friend Dr. Johnson write as follows: — “Mr. Reynolds has within these few days “raised his prices to twenty guineas a head; and Miss” (Reynolds, his sister,) “is much employed in miniatures.”† Years rolled on, and fame increased, until at last Sir Joshua, in his old age, received from Horace Walpole (not without some reluctance in the latter) a thousand guineas for his fine picture of the three Ladies Waldegrave.

The revival of British art, and the number of artists in London, could not fail, besides the example of foreign countries, to suggest to them the advantages of association. About the time of the accession of George the Third they agreed to have an annual exhibition of works of art. They met with many difficulties, and but moderate encouragement. In 1765 they obtained a Charter of Incorporation, which, however, could by no means reconcile their divers sections and parties. At last, in 1768, they were constituted by the King as the ROYAL ACADEMY, to include all three branches of architecture, sculpture, and painting. His Majesty, although himself no judge of art, became its patron. During several years, he made liberal grants from his Privy Purse to the rising Academy, until the receipts from its early exhibitions had grown to be more than sufficient for its objects. Apartments also were assigned it by its Royal Patron, in 1780, at Somerset House.‡

Of the new institution Reynolds was with good reason, and by an unanimous vote, elected President. On that occasion he received the honour of knighthood — an honour which ever since has been considered as almost

\* Life of Reynolds by Malone, p. xii.

† Letter to Mr. Langton, January 9. 1758, and Mr. Croker's note.

‡ The sums contributed by the King at various times exceeded 5000*l*. In 1779 the receipts of the Exhibition were upwards of 1500*l*., and double that sum was obtained in the next year, — the first in Somerset House. (Life of Reynolds by Malone, p. xxiii.)

the right of his successors. To the duties of his office he brought an enlightened judgment, a mild dignity, a never-failing love of Art. Seldom indeed have such Chairs been more worthily filled than were, for some time concurrently, that of the Royal Society by Sir Joseph Banks, and that of the Royal Academy by Sir Joshua Reynolds. Though not always quite friendly in his feelings towards the artists who had risen by his side\*, he was uniformly kind and helpful to the rising. His counsel was prompt to guide and his hospitality to cheer them. At his board, which once at least in every week was open to a company of guests, they might meet and commune with some of the leading spirits of the age in other walks of life beside their own; while presiding over all was seen, with spectacles on his nose, and with a trumpet at his ear, that placid and benignant countenance which his own pencil has often portrayed, and made familiar to us.

The application of Sir Joshua to his art was never relaxed by his growing wealth or fame. Usually he was in his painting room before ten o'clock, and remained there at least six hours. According to the fine expression of Mr. Burke, who to the honour of both was his intimate friend: "In painting portraits, he appeared not to be "raised upon that platform, but to descend to it from a "higher sphere. His paintings illustrate his lessons, and "his lessons seem to be derived from his paintings." Never, perhaps, was his pencil more felicitous and truthful than in all its delineations of infancy. It was one of his favourite maxims that all the gestures of children are graceful, and that the reign of distortion and unnatural attitude commences with the dancing master.†

It was to portraits that Reynolds gave his more especial care. Yet they did not wholly engross it. Many exquisite fancy pieces of the most opposite kinds bear witness to his skill. How various, for example, are the works of his genius contained in that grey old mansion of Knole, where, embosomed in coeval groves of beech, the accomplished race of the Sackvilles, now extinct in the male line, showed themselves both partakers and patrons of

\* See on this point the *Memoirs of Sir Joshua* by Northcote, p. 317. &c., and the *Supplement*, p. cxlii.

† *Life by Malone*, p. lii.

intellectual eminence! There in one place we find Sir Joshua personify with the laughing eyes and the elastic form of Mrs. Abington the Comic Muse. There, on another side, we behold him follow in the footsteps of the Tuscan poet of old time—unveil the dismal secrets of the “Tower of Hunger,”—and portray Count Ugolino and his children in the agonies of their famishing despair.

Far from being satisfied with his own success, Sir Joshua was ever aiming at improvement. Late in his career, and at considerable cost, he took the pains to decompose some valuable pictures of the old Venetian School, in order to trace and ascertain their process of colouring. It must be owned, however, that such experiments were made in some measure at the expense of his friends. Thus at Blenheim, which, during one phase of his art, he adorned with many admirable portraits, a spectator at the present day must observe with concern, that the colours have so far faded from each face of female loveliness as exactly to resemble the livid hues of death. The change can scarce have been greater in the originals themselves.

From some such result or anticipation, Sir Joshua did not persevere for any long period in the new courses which he tried. Towards the close of his life, he had an opportunity to see again that portrait of Captain Hamilton which he had painted some forty years before. He was surprised to find it so good, and, comparing it with his later works, lamented that during so many years he should not have made a greater progress.\*

Of the other principal painters at this time, Hogarth had died four years before the Academy was constituted. The best judges have deemed him deficient in the art of colouring. But, as Horace Walpole happily expresses it, he should be considered rather as a writer of comedy with a pencil than as a painter. Allan Ramsay, son of the poet of that name, though far inferior to Reynolds, showed in his portraits both taste and skill. Like Reynolds he was a friend of Dr. Johnson, who speaks of him with warm regard, and survived him only a few months.†

\* Life by Malone, p. viii.

† “Poor Ramsay! . . . I no sooner lost sight of dear Allan than I am told that I shall see him no more.” (To Sir Joshua Reynolds, Aug. 19. 1784.)

Ramsay was painter in ordinary to the King and Queen, in fact, it has been remarked, that their Majesties never gave Sir Joshua a commission for a single picture, and sat to him only once, when their portraits were required for the Royal Academy.\* In 1766, however, Reynolds was selected to paint the portrait of the Queen of Denmark on her marriage. He was wont to complain of the difficulties of the task, since during the hours of sitting, that ill-assorted and unhappy Princess had been for the most part in tears.†

Romney was another painter of high reputation in his day. There are not many things in biography more striking than the tale how, at the age of twenty-seven, he forsook his young wife at Kendal, and went forth to seek his fortune in London — how, after seven-and-thirty years of desertion, he returned to her, rich indeed and famous, but worn out in body and in mind — and how, with patient forgiveness, she nursed him during his remaining span of decay, and at last of imbecility. When in full possession of his powers, he had been deemed a rival to Sir Joshua himself, and it is by no means to the credit of the President, that Romney never was elected even an associate of the Royal Academy. Indeed, whenever Reynolds had occasion to refer to him, he would call him only “the man in Cavendish Square.” In those days Lord Thurlow had said: “There are two ‘factions in Art, and for my part I am of the Romney ‘faction.’” But, as Mr. Southey observes, time has reversed the Chancellor’s decision.‡

The true rival of Reynolds, in our eyes at least, was Gainsborough. Born and bred in Suffolk, he had not the advantages of academic education or foreign travel; but from his earliest years he manifested an inborn passion for art. A beautiful wood near Sudbury is still shown, where Gainsborough, in his school-boy days, used to sit and fill his copy-books with pencillings of flowers and trees.§ With Wilson he divides the honour of founding

\* *Memoirs by Northcote*, p. 259.

† *Ibid.* Supplement, p. xliii.

‡ *Life of Cowper*, vol. iii. p. 77.

§ *Cunningham’s Lives of the Painters*, vol. iii. p. 320.

our school of landscape; with Reynolds the honour of restoring our school of portrait-painting. Below Sir Joshua in the taste and composition of his portraits, it may be questioned whether he does not excel him in a still more essential quality—the true and life-like delineation of the countenance portrayed.

At this time the name of British sculpture was worthily upheld by Bacon and Nollekens. To the former Westminster Abbey owes the great monument of Chatham; the latter was good in statues, but excellent in busts. In their literary attainments they differed greatly. Of Bacon we are told, that he showed some skill in composition, while Nollekens was wholly ignorant of grammar and spelling.\* Of both it is pleasing to find, that their profession brought them wealth as well as fame. Bacon at his death left 60,000*l.*, and Nollekens, whose career was much longer, no less than 200,000*l.*

An Academy comprising men like these, men of every variety of birth, of education, of character, and of creed, (thus, for example, Bacon was a Methodist, Nollekens a Roman Catholic, and Flaxman a follower of Swedenborg,) was often discordant and disturbed. Some complaints from those whom it excludes, some quarrels among those whom it admits, are, perhaps, in any such institution unavoidable. Certainly they have not been avoided. Even at the present day the war, at least from without, is waging. But there is one day in the year, when, by common consent, all strife is hushed, all rivalry suspended, when on the first Saturday in May the Exhibition Rooms, rich with the well-wrought toils of the preceding year, are opened by the President and his brother Academicians to a chosen company of guests. There all ranks, all professions, and all parties—intellectual pleasure being for that day a sufficient bond between them—are assembled to commune with artists and do homage to Art. There the Ministers of the Crown, forgetting the Parliamentary battles of the night before, exchange a cordial greeting with the Ministers who were, or the Ministers who will be, as in emulous admiration they throng around some stag or sheltie of Landseer, or a sunlit lake by Stanfield. There the

\* Cunningham's *Lives of the Sculptors*, pp. 195. and 200.



poet may behold the visions of his fancy bodied forth in living hues. There the historian may acknowledge his own descriptions far exceeded.\* There as the banquet ceases, and the shades of evening close in, the gaslights that were kept ready burst into a sudden radiance, and illumine the pictured walls at the very moment when the health of the Sovereign is proposed, and the name of VICTORIA is pronounced. Nor will any former guest forget how in the speeches, throughout that evening, the common interchange of compliments was graced, and, as it were, exalted, by the skill and taste and diction—such as on no similar occasion have I heard surpassed,—of Sir Martin Shee.

The contemporaries of the first Academicians speak with little respect of the taste for art which then prevailed. Goldsmith, in his *Vicar of Wakefield*, observes that there are two infallible rules by which any one may acquire the name of connoisseur among the English; the one always to assert that the picture might have been better if the painter had taken more pains; and the other to praise the works of Pietro Perugino. Foote, in one of his plays, aims many a bitter jest at the ignorant enthusiasm so readily imposed upon by new-made antiquities of Herculaneum, or spurious works of Guido and Raphael. He goes on to a complaint of the admiration for these great old Masters, as though it must involve some injustice to the living†—a complaint, however, which any real artist, or real friend to Art, will be slow to make. By experience the very reverse is shown. As with the artist himself a growing admiration of the painter “sires of Italy” becomes a sure test of his own progress, so with the patron of Art that admiration, if heart-felt and unfeigned, leads to no slight or disparagement of the present

\* May I be allowed to express my warm appreciation of the genius and success with which one passage of this History (“A Scene in ‘Change Alley in 1720,” vol. ii. p. 11.) has been illustrated by Mr. E. M. Ward. (No. 291. in the Exhibition of 1847.)

† In his play of “Taste,” a picture of Pharaoh’s Daughter and Moses being much commended:—

*Brush.* Lack a day, ’tis but a modern performance; the Master is alive, and an Englishman.

*Lord Dupe.* Oh! then I would not give it house-room!

school, but rather to a more thoughtful and indulgent appreciation of its labours — not requiring from it that it should approach the unapproachable, but only that its principles should be tried, and its path the true one.

It is not arrogance or harshness, but, on the contrary, a gentle and a reverent spirit, a sense of our own brief span and fleeting pleasures, that are fostered by a frequent contemplation of the works of the departed great. Once, as Sir David Wilkie (Mr. Washington Irving and myself being then his fellow-travellers in Spain) was gazing on one of Titian's master-pieces — the famous picture of the Last Supper in the Refectory of the Escorial — an old Monk of the Order of St. Jerome came up to him, and said, "I have sate daily in sight of that picture for now nearly threescore years. During that time my companions have dropped off one after another — all who were my seniors, all who were of my own age, and many or most of those who were younger than myself — nothing has been unchanged around me except those figures, large as life, in yonder painting — and I look at them till I sometimes think that they are the realities and we the shadows!"

Far, therefore, from joining in the shallow sarcasms of Foote, we shall see reason to lament and wonder that a public collection of the works of the great old Masters was for so many years delayed amongst us. More than half a century elapsed between the establishment of the Royal Academy and the establishment of the National Gallery. Even now the latter collection has by no means attained the number of pictures, nor the degree of merit, which in such a country as ours it should have long ago. The lack of it has been, in many cases, supplied by what indeed no future excellence in it can ever wholly supersede either to artist or to connoisseur — a pilgrimage to Italy. It may be truly said that Rome in this age is as renowned for the concourse of English in the cause of Art, as for objects of devotion it was in the days of the Lombard Kings.\*

\* *His temporibus multi Anglorum gentis nobiles et ignobiles, viri et foeminae, duces et primates, divini amoris instinctu, Romam venire consueverunt.* (Paul Warnetrid, *De Gest. Langob. lib. vi. c. 37.*)

The progress of good taste in England during the last hundred years has been in nothing more signally shown than in gardens and pleasure grounds. There is a striking remark of Lord Bacon on this subject. "Further, a man shall see that when ages advance in civility and politeness, men come to build stately sooner than to garden finely, as if gardening was the greater perfection." Yet Bacon himself may be considered to afford an instance of the inferior taste which he commemorates; when in his *Essay on Gardens* he goes on to recommend for his model a perfect square, intersected by trimmed hedges. Later in his century the examples of France and Holland led us to still more fantastic ornaments, and still more formal symmetry. But the early years of George the Third beheld a great reaction. So complete has it proved, that at present throughout the whole of England there remains, perhaps, scarcely more than one private garden presenting in all its parts an entire and true specimen of the old designs. This is at the fine old seat of Levens near Kendal. There, along a wide extent of terraced walks and walls, eagles of holly and peacocks of yew still find with each returning summer their wings clipped and their talons pared. There a stately remnant of the ancient *PROMENOIRS* — such as the Frenchmen taught our fathers, rather I would say to build than plant — along which, in days of old, stalked the gentlemen with periwigs and swords, the ladies in hoops and furbelows — may still to this day be seen. Some traces of the same taste may also be explored elsewhere. But happily, in the vast majority of cases, the time has long since gone by when the beauty of trees was thought to be promoted by the assiduous use of the shears, or when a close connexion was sought to be established between the sciences of mathematics and of gardening.

This improvement, like several others, was at least in some degree promoted by the example of George the Third. His Majesty honoured with his favourable notice, and admitted to his familiar converse (sometimes on politics also), the principal designer of gardens in the new taste, Mr. Lancelot Brown. That gentleman had been from his boyhood a servant of the House of Grenville, and rose by his merit to be head-gardener at Stowe, until,

on the recommendation of Lord Cobham, he was appointed by George the Second to the same place at Hampton Court. At a later period, he undertook the profession of "improver," and was commonly known by the name of "Capability Brown" from his frequent use of that word in speaking of any grounds submitted to his skill. He was a man of strict probity; and far unlike most promoters of any new system, could see the necessity of occasional deviation from his rules. Thus, when the King proposed to him to lay out afresh the gardens at Hampton Court he had the good sense and manliness to decline the unpromising attempt.\*

\* On Lancelot Brown see two notes in the Chatham Papers, vol. iv. p. 178. and 430. See also Uvedale Price's Essay on the Picturesque, vol. i. p. 258. It was Brown who, at Blenheim, converted a low marsh and scanty rill into a vast expanse of water; thus unconsciously depriving of all sting the epigram against the stately bridge which the great Duke had built.

"The lofty arch his high ambition shows,

"The stream an emblem of his bounty flows!"

# APPENDIX.





## APPENDIX.

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### DOCUMENTS FOR THE AMERICAN WAR.

1774—1783.

THE following is an extract of a letter addressed to the writer of this History by Robert Southey, Esq.

*Keswick, August 13. 1832.*

“WHEN Jared Sparks was in England about five years ago, our State Papers relating to America during the War were examined in consequence of his inquiries. It was then thought that our own story would bear telling and ought to be told, and a circuitous application was made to me to know whether I would undertake it. I declined the proposal, because great part of my life had been passed in preparing for other subjects, and if they were left unfinished that labour would be lost. But the American War is a fine subject, and treated as you would treat it, with the same perfect fairness as the Succession War, its history would vindicate the honour of this country, at the same time that it rendered full justice to the opposite cause.”

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Highly as I prized my lamented friend Mr. Southey's good opinion, I do not insert his letter without great doubt and hesitation, on account of the compliment to myself which it contains. But I feel desirous to record,

in his own words, the proposal made to him, so much to his honour, by the British Government, to undertake a History of the American War—the sources from which, in his opinion, that history might be derived—and the spirit in which it should be written.

Since that time I have had full opportunity, like Mr. Jared Sparks, to examine the despatches to and from America in our State Paper Office. It seemed to me, however, that the information which they convey has been, to a great extent, anticipated by the large extracts laid before Parliament from time to time, as also by the pamphlets and speeches of British Generals as Howe and Burgoyne.

Since Mr. Southey's letter and according to his expectation, further and valuable extracts from these documents have been published by Mr. Jared Sparks, in the notes to the collected edition of Washington's Writings. Mr. Sparks's own share in these notes and illustrations is written not only with much ability, but in a spirit, on most points, of candour and fairness; and the whole collection is of great historical interest and importance. I am bound, however, not to conceal the opinion I have formed, that Mr. Sparks has printed no part of the correspondence precisely as Washington wrote it, but has greatly altered, and, as he thinks, corrected and embellished it.

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To support the charge which I had made, there here followed in the first edition some extracts from certain letters in Mr. Sparks's compilation, placed side by side with the same letters from the more recent biography of Reed, these last having been (as was stated) printed precisely from the original MSS. of Washington. Instead of these parallel passages it will be more satisfactory to myself and more just to Mr. Sparks, if I now reprint and insert a letter, which I wrote and published in the summer of 1852, explaining the progress of the controversy upon this subject, renouncing certain grounds of charge, and giving in more detail those to which I still adhere.

LETTER TO JARED SPARKS, ESQ.; BEING A REJOINDER TO HIS "REPLY TO THE STRICTURES OF LORD MAHON AND OTHERS ON THE MODE OF EDITING THE WRITINGS OF WASHINGTON."

SIR,

I HAVE received (one copy through your own courtesy, if I mistake not,) the three Letters which you have published at Boston in reply to the comments which, in some recent volumes of my History of England, I took the liberty of making on your edition of Washington's Writings. To the arguments and statements of these Letters I have given my careful consideration. I have also read with attention some other publications, which mainly the same controversy has, within the last few months, called forth both at Boston and New York.

It would not, I think, have been either my desire or my duty to have troubled you with any rejoinder on this subject, if there were not one point in which I am now aware of having done you an injustice, though, as I trust I shall be able to show, in no degree from any fault of my own. That injustice, however, having been committed, I am anxious thus publicly to explain and to apologise for it. On other points I must declare myself prepared, though with all possible respect for your observations, to adhere to and maintain the opinions I advanced.

In your Letters you more than once assume that I have "adopted and repeated" the strictures on your edition which first appeared in the New York "Evening Post." That is not the case. I never even saw those strictures previous to my own publication. But on reading, some years since, the letters of Washington comprised in the "Life and Correspondence of General Reed," I was struck at finding in them many important and curious passages which I did not remember to have noticed in the corresponding letters published by yourself. From thence I was led to make a careful and minute comparison between the two.

The result of that comparison I stated, as follows, in the Appendix to the sixth volume of my "History of England," which was published in December last:—

"I am bound not to conceal the opinion I have formed, that Mr. Sparks has printed no part of the correspondence precisely as Washington wrote it; but has greatly altered, and, as he thinks, corrected and embellished it. Such a liberty with the writing of such a man, might be justifiable—nay, even in some respects necessary, if Washington and his principal contemporaries had been still alive; but the date of this publication (the year 1838) leaves, as I conceive, no adequate vindication for tampering with the truth of history.

"The charge which I make upon the subject is mainly derived from a comparison of Washington's letters to President Reed (which, in Reed's recent biography, are printed precisely from the original MSS.), and the same letters as they appear in Mr. Sparks's collection."—I then proceeded to give several of the parallel passages in collocation, leaving the reader to judge of the variations as he pleased.

The charge of tampering with the truth of history, so far as published documents of an older date are concerned, may be resolved into three; namely, of omissions, corrections, and additions. All these three charges I intended distinctly to bring against you, as the Editor of "Washington's Letters." In support of the last, and certainly, as you observe, the heaviest of the three, I relied on the two following passages that I adduced from General Reed's "Memoirs."

*As General Washington wrote :*

"The drift and design (of Great Britain) are obvious; but, is it possible, that any sensible—but enough: or else, on a subject so copious, I should enter upon my fifth sheet of paper." (March 7. 1776.)

*As Mr. Sparks has published :—*

"The drift and design (of Great Britain) are obvious; but, is it possible, that any sensible nation upon earth can be imposed upon by such a cobweb scheme or gauze covering?" (March 7. 1776.)

"If this has given rise to the jealousy, I cannot say that I am sorry for it." (Dec. 15. 1775.)

"If this has given rise to the jealousy, I can only say that I am sorry for it." (Dec. 12. 1775.)

Here, then, were the apparent additions, or substitutions,

which I found. I found them, as I shall presently show, in letters wherein you had, beyond dispute, made many other changes. I found them edited by a gentleman, Mr. William Reed, to whose high character and attainments I was not a stranger—the less so, since his brother, Mr. Henry Reed, had done me the honour of directing and of annotating the American edition of my “History of “England,” so far as the earlier volumes are concerned. Now, then, having found these passages, I will put it to any candid person, and will include you, Sir, in the number, whether I was to blame for the conclusion that I drew from them? Had I not a right to say that the “cobweb schemes, or gauze coverings,” seemed to be of your own manufacture? Had I not a right to intimate a suspicion in one or two other places of my History, whether such *improvements* had not extended farther—whether the same manufactory had not been busy elsewhere?

The answer to this last query is, as it appears to me, supplied by yourself in your recent “Letters.” “If an “Editor,” you say, “would allow himself to make an “addition to the text in one place, he might do it in “another, and in many others.”

I am now assured, however, that the passage on “cobweb schemes and gauze coverings,” does really occur in Washington’s original MS. The two lines containing it were, it appears, omitted by an inadvertency of Mr. William Reed’s transcriber in preparing his volumes for the press. All that you have done with the paragraph in your edition, was to omit the unimportant closing sentence, “But enough, or else, &c.” This fact I learn not merely from the assertion in your Letters, to which, whenever you speak upon your own knowledge, I am ready to give implicit credit, but also from Mr. William Reed himself, whose personal acquaintance I had the honour to make last month, in a visit which he paid to England.

The second variation of “I cannot say that I am sorry “for it,” or, “I can only say that I am sorry for it,” is not at present explained; but the former and more important added sentence, as it seemed, being thus accounted for, I am quite willing to assume that this also has arisen from

no intentional design, but only from some inadvertency or oversight either on Mr. Reed's side, or upon your own.

With the positive facts, as they seemed, before me in 1851, I do not consider myself justly amenable to your rebuke as having made either a "rash" or a "loose" allegation against you. On the contrary, I must say, that if exactly the same facts were before me now, in 1852, I should still hold exactly the same opinions which I expressed in 1851. But after Mr. Reed's statement and your own, of the inadvertency which has crept into his volumes, I am now most willing to withdraw my charge against you of having made unauthorised additions. I am sorry that I should have made it. I will even go farther, and express my regret that, believing as I did that charge to be well founded and fully proved, I adopted a tone towards you, in one or two other passages of my History, different from that which I should have used had I thought you wholly free from such an imputation. For, having now so explicitly recalled that charge, I need surely not scruple to say, that as it seems to me the making unauthorised additions, without notice, to the original papers of a great man is among the worst and most wilful errors that an Editor can possibly commit — not at all short, in fact, of a literary forgery.

The two other, and, I readily admit, far lesser charges which I had alleged, do not seem to me shaken by your reasoning upon them. Several cases in support of both were given by me from General Reed's volumes, and several more, as I then stated, there remained to give. I do not understand that the accuracy of any of these cases is now disputed or denied. Take the first point as to correction, or, as I ventured to call it, attempted embellishment. You admit, I apprehend, that where, for example, Washington in familiar correspondence mentions "Old Put," you have made him say "General Putnam" (April 1. 1776); that where he speaks of a small sum as "but a flea-bite at present," you have substituted the words "totally inadequate to our demands at this time" (November 28. 1775); that where, in the same letter, he complains of an incompetent secretary, and adds, "I shall make a lame hand, therefore, to have two of this kidney,"



you prefer to lean on the preceding paragraph that they cannot "render that assistance which is expected of them." In describing this process applied to Washington's correspondence, I observed that "Mr. Sparks has greatly altered "and, as he thinks, corrected and embellished it." This account of your motives I am sorry to find appears to you exceedingly unjust. You say, in the course of your reply, "his Lordship also undertakes to inform his readers what "the Editor thinks; but I assure him that the Editor "never had such a thought, nor ever dreamed of embellishing Washington's language in any manner what-ever." Of course you must be the best authority as to your own intentions. Yet, let me ask you, what other motive can by possibility be assigned for such corrections besides the one that I have stated? Is it not quite clear in these cases, that you were seeking to use language more conformable to Washington's dignity of character than Washington could use for himself? We in England, with the highest respect for the memory of that great man, believe that in his own true form he is sufficiently exalted. It is only some of his countrymen who desire to set him upon stilts!

Then, again, to what other motive besides "embellishment" are we to ascribe your omission of all the vehement language which Washington at this period applies in familiar correspondence to the English? You will not allow him, as he appears in your pages to call Lord Dunmore "that arch-traitor to the rights of humanity," (Dec. 15. 1775); or the English people "a nation which seems "to be lost to every sense of virtue, and to those feelings "which distinguish a civilized people from the most barbarous savages," (Jan. 31. 1776). Again, where Washington really wrote that in the Carolinas, "Mr. Martin's "first attempt [through those universal instruments of "tyranny, the Scotch] has met with its deserved success," you leave out the passage within the brackets, (April 1. 1776). You deemed, no doubt, that such phrases were not perfectly consistent with Washington's serene and lofty character. Yet I, as a Briton, can read them without resentment, and should have certainly retained them. Such angry feelings are not, I think, surprising in the midst of an arduous contest, and, with Washington's

noble nature, I am sure that they did not survive it. There is another passage very far more blameable. On the same 1st of April, 1776, Washington writes of the loyalist Americans left behind at Boston: "One or two" of them have committed what it would have been happy "for mankind if more of them had done long ago — the "act of suicide!" For this harshness I can offer no excuse. I am not astonished at your desire to conceal it. But still I must say, that if you will strike out so many of the lineaments, you must not expect to have a truthful likeness. If you will mould only an imposing statue, you must lose sight of the real man of flesh and blood.

In your reply as lately published, you urge as an apology for several of the discrepancies which have been noticed in your volumes, that the letter-books retained by Washington, and used by yourself as your main materials, are found to differ in many slight verbal particulars from the originals sent out. But this apology, of which I do not deny the force in such samples as you have afforded, has, at all events, no application to the longer phrases in any of Washington's letters. Nor can it apply even to a single word in his correspondence with Reed, from which alone I have been quoting, since I understand it to be admitted that no copies of these letters appear in any of Washington's books; and that you derived such among them as you have thought fit to publish from the original, as received by General Reed, and as placed in your hands by his grandson, Mr. William Reed.

You also allege with considerable force and truth that an Editor is both entitled and bound to correct errors of haste and heedlessness in the manuscript letters before him. So far as this is limited to "obvious slips of the "pen," and to "manifest faults of grammar," or I may add of spelling, I have not the least objection to make. I would only qualify my admission thus far, that if, in any writer of sufficient eminence to render the remark worth while, the faults of grammar and of spelling should appear common and habitual, it may be proper to notice the defect. I have done so, for instance, in the case of Prince Charles of "the Forty-Five." I have printed his letters quite correctly, for mis-spelled letters are a pain to read; but I have taken care to intimate how far the

originals were otherwise. "With him," I said, "humour, "for example, becomes UMER; the weapon he knew so "well how to wield is a SORD; and even his own father's "name (of James) appears under the alias of GEMS."

Let me not be understood as supposing for a moment that any thing of this kind can apply to Washington. My meaning is only that, when you contend for the Editor's privilege to correct "obvious slips of the pen," or trifling inaccuracies of grammar or of spelling, you contend for what I have myself practised, and have never disputed or denied. And, let me add in passing, that I think you have subjected the controversy between us to an unnecessary disadvantage. For it appears, on your own showing, that you answered my book before you had read it. You judged of it solely by some extracts which you saw in the New York "Evening Post." Yet, as I venture to conceive, your objections would have lost nothing of their force and point had they been deferred until you had become more fully acquainted with the statements against which they were directed. Let me give one instance, and only one, of the mistakes into which you have consequently fallen. You say, and with good reason, of yourself as the Editor of Washington's letters, that in many cases where erroneous opinions and false impressions had prevailed in America concerning the motives and plans of the British Ministry or British commanders in the war, you had in your notes, "taken "especial care, when practicable, to correct such errors "by a free use of the materials procured from the British "offices." And then you add, in reference to my work, "A British historian might, perhaps, find something to "commend in the result of my attempts." Now had you seen my work you would have found that I have been far from overlooking or withholding an acknowledgment of the merit which you justly claim. Thus at vol. vi., p. 75., speaking of the destruction of Falmouth U.S. by the English, I had written, "See the extracts of our State "Paper Office, as obtained by Mr. Jared Sparks, and "produced by him in a valuable note. Mr. Sparks adds, "'No part of this reproach can rightfully attach to the "'British Ministry. The act had no higher source than "'the wounded pride of a subordinate officer.'" And, in

the Appendix to the same volume, I have mentioned the "further and valuable extracts from these documents (at the State Paper Office), which have been published by Mr. Jared Sparks in the notes to the collected edition of Washington's Writings. Mr. Sparks's own share in these notes and illustrations is written not only with much ability, but in a spirit, on most points, of candour and fairness, and the whole collection is of great historical interest and importance."

Surely I may be allowed, without any departure from courtesy, to observe, that when you, in your recent Letters, rebuke a brother author for "rashness," it might have been still more consistent with the absence of that defect in yourself, to have postponed your reply to a volume until the volume itself should have reached your hands.

From this digression, I return to our controversy as to "embellishment." Considering the licence which you have taken on that subject, it has been necessary to lay down upon your side a far wider theory on the rights and duties of an Editor, than is comprised in the correction of "obvious slips of the pen." I find it laid down in substance, by those who argue for your vindication, that where letters have been written in great haste, or with entire unreserve, an Editor is entitled (even at a long subsequent period, and where there is no living person affected,) to revise them in the writer's place—to bring them as nearly as possible to the same state as the writer would have brought them, had time for reflection been allowed him. Now this seems to me a privilege most perilous to historic truth; and, as a fellow-labourer in the field of literature, I most earnestly protest against it. In the argument referring to yourself, it is confined to points of less accurate or less dignified style. But why, on the same grounds, might it not be extended to points of meaning, also? I will give an instance, to render my own meaning more clear.

There is a letter of Washington's, in which he complains that in an affair at Haerlem (Sept. 16. 1776) two brigades which he mentions had behaved ill—in fact, had run away. Now let us suppose that the first intelligence had proved inaccurate, and that these troops had really done their duty. Why, then, might not a later Editor

argue on your principle, that Washington, were he alive, would have no other wish than to do justice to his soldiers—that he would have been eager to correct his false impressions—that his Editor is bound to bring his despatch to the same state as he would have brought it—that the change may be easily made (let us suppose) by half a word,—and that, therefore, instead of “behaved ill,” we ought to see in print “behaved well!” In short, I would ask you, Sir, upon the principle which you seem to think the privilege of an Editor, what safe line for historic truth can possibly be drawn?

My main complaint against you, and your principal allegations in defence, turn, however, on the omissions which you have made as to points in which neither Washington’s character nor yet his style are in any degree involved. Let us then see in detail how, as to such omissions, the case really stands. The facts, as I understand it, are not here disputed. Where Washington speaks of certain shippers from New England as “our ‘rascally privateer’s-men,” you leave out the epithet, (Nov. 20. 1775). Where he speaks of certain soldiers from Connecticut as showing “a dirty mercenary spirit,” you leave out the former epithet also, (Nov. 28. 1775). Where he complains of the inadequate supply of money to his camp from the provincial Assemblies, you suppress his concluding exclamation: “Strange conduct this!” (Dec. 15. 1775). One New England officer is not it seems to be mentioned by Washington with a touch of irony as “the noble Colonel Enos,” and that epithet, likewise, is to be expunged, (Nov. 20. 1775). Of another New England officer, Colonel Hancock, you will not allow Washington to express his suspicion, with respect to a letter of his own, that “Colonel Hancock read what I ‘never wrote,” (Dec. 25. 1775). Of a third New England officer you will not allow Washington to observe, “I have ‘no opinion at all of Wooster’s enterprising genius,” (Jan. 23. 1776). Of a fourth, General Fry, you will not allow us to hear that “at present he keeps his room, and ‘talks learnedly of emetics and cathartics. For my own ‘part I see nothing but a declining life that matters ‘him,” (March 7. 1776). Nor are we to have the amusing description of a fifth New England officer, General

Ward, who first resigned on account of his ill health, and then retracted his resignation, "on account, as he says, of its being disagreeable to some of the officers. Who those officers are, I have not heard. They have been able, no doubt, to convince him of his mistake, and that his health will allow him to be alert and active!" (April 1. 1776). You will not suffer Washington to say of Massachusetts, as compared with other States, "there is no nation under the sun that I ever came across pays greater adoration to money than they do," (Feb. 10. 1776). You will not suffer him to say, when New England had failed to supply him with the gunpowder he needed, "We have every thing but *the* thing ready for any offensive operation," (Feb. 26. 1776). Here you think fit to omit the three most important words "but *the* thing," by which Washington, in a becoming soldier-phrase, meant powder, and by this omission you have entirely altered the representation of his circumstances which he intended to convey.

All these cases of omission (and the list is very far from being yet exhausted) are derived only from that short series of letters which Washington addressed to Reed between November, 1775, and April, 1776. Yet even from such samples as I have already given, is it possible that any dispassionate reader can take, either of your alterations or omissions, the same view as appears to be taken by yourself? In the Introduction to your edition of Washington's Writings you had given the following pledge or promise as to your work: "Many of the letters, for the reasons already assigned, will necessarily be printed with omissions of unimportant passages, relating chiefly to topics or facts evanescent in their nature and temporary in their design. Special care will be taken, nevertheless, in all such omissions, that the sense shall not be marred, nor the meaning of the writer in any manner perverted or obscured." And in your recent pamphlet you think fit to add: "This is all that I have done in the way of altering or correcting Washington's letters. The alterations are strictly verbal or grammatical; nor am I conscious that in this process an historical fact, the expression of an opinion, or the meaning of a sentence, has on any occasion been per-



“verted or modified.” But, on the contrary, can any dispassionate reader be in doubt as to the course you have pursued? Can he be in doubt as to the motive which, unconsciously perhaps, has been working in your mind? Is it not quite clear that in these omissions you have been desirous to strike out, as far as possible, every word or phrase that could possibly touch the local fame of the gentlemen at Boston, or wound in any manner the sensitive feelings of New England?

Now, Sir, on this point let me be clearly understood. I am far, very far, from condemning your warm attachment to the country of your birth. I respect and honour that feeling. But what I contend for is, that you had no right to indulge that feeling in such a manner. It is not just as regards the historical question between England and America. Still less is it just as regards the historical question between the several American States.

Surely, though you may not see this in your own case, a gentleman of much less than your sagacity would quickly discern it in another's. — As I look up from writing, my eyes fall on a chest before me containing two folio volumes in the original MS., which have been confided to me; they are the narrative by Lieutenant-General Sir Henry Clinton of his North American campaigns. Now, supposing for a moment that this MS. contained (which it does not) strong allegations in some places against the American insurgents, and in other places strong admissions in their favour. What would be thought of me, I ask, were I to publish this MS., retaining all the passages of the first kind, and omitting all the passages of the latter? Would you not then retort upon me, and with the fullest right, the phrase which I had ventured to apply to you, and say, that I had been “tampering with the truth of History?”

In the passage of my History to which you have replied I limited myself, for the sake of brevity, to the letters derived from the “Memoirs of Reed;” but I was well aware that these by no means completed the proofs that I could bring in support of my assertion. I had already had occasion to compare (in part at least) other letters in your collection with the corresponding ones which Mr. Peter Force has inserted in some volumes subsequent in

date to yours, namely in the "Fourth Series" of his "American Archives." In that work, which is published under the authority of Congress, the correspondence is stated to be copied, so far as was possible, precisely from the original MSS. The letters which I here take for the purpose of comparison, extend for the period of one year, since Washington assumed the command at Cambridge (July 3. 1775) until the Declaration of Independence (July 4. 1776), when the "Fourth Series" of the Archives ends. These letters are in part addressed to the General's brother John Augustine Washington, and in part to the President of Congress. No letters written by Washington can be of higher value and interest than these. In the one we have the outpourings of fraternal confidence; in the other, the main communications from the head of the army to the head of the government at that time. Now of these letters I have to say that, on comparing Mr. Force's work and yours, I found in yours other suppressions and omissions similar to those of which I complained in the case of Reed. And it seems to me quite impossible that any candid reader, with the facts before him, can doubt that you were guided by the same motive as to both — by a desire to deal as tenderly as possible with anything or any body that has the honour to be connected with New England.

A few instances will suffice for this conclusion. Where Washington mentions to the President "the scandalous conduct of a great number of the Connecticut troops" (December 4. 1775), you strike out the epithet "scandalous." Nor are we to be told of the Boston troops that they were once "extremely uneasy, and almost mutinous, for want of pay," (June 8. 1776). Now, here I ask, is it, or is it not, important to show how far Washington, at that period, could rely upon all his soldiers?

The whole of the following paragraph is omitted by you from Washington's letter to the President of August 4. 1775, although you have inserted the paragraph which immediately precedes, and also the paragraph which immediately follows it:—

"I am sorry to be under a necessity of making such frequent examples among the officers, when a sense of honour and the interest of their country might be ex-

“pected to make punishment unnecessary. Since my  
“last, Captain Parker, of Massachusetts, for frauds both  
“in pay and provisions, and Captain Gardiner, of Rhode  
“Island, for cowardice in running away from his guard  
“on an alarm, have been broke. As nothing can be  
“more fatal to an army than crimes of this kind, I am  
“determined, by every motive of reward and punish-  
“ment, to prevent them in future.”

Had you, Sir, here thought fit to leave in blank the names of the two Captains, although Mr. Force prints them at full length, I should not have seen the smallest reason to complain of your reserve. But, while leaving, if you wished it, these names in blank, why omit the rest, or, at the very least, the first sentence of this paragraph? I ask again, is it, or is it not, important to show how far Washington at that period could rely upon all his officers?

On the same principle, you omit, from the same letter, a curious story told by Washington relative to his want of powder. He had found, amidst his extreme deficiency, 303 barrels reported as in store from Massachusetts, “upon which,” he says, “I was very particular in my inquiries, and found that the Committee of Supplies not being sufficiently acquainted with the nature of a Return, or misapprehending my request, had sent in an account of all the ammunition which had been collected by the province, so that the report included not only what was on hand, but what had been spent!”

Here, I ask once more, is it, or is it not, important to show how far Washington, at that period, could depend upon the accuracy of his colleagues, the members of the Local Congress?

But, perhaps, of all the passages which you have thought proper to suppress, the following, from Washington’s confidential letter to the President, of July 21. 1775, is the most important:—

“Upon my arrival, and since, some complaints have  
“been preferred against officers for cowardice in the late  
“action on Bunker’s Hill. Though, there were several  
“strong circumstances, and a very general opinion  
“against them, none have been condemned except a

“ Captain Callender of the artillery, who was immediately cashiered. I have been sorry to find it an undictated fact that the principal failure of duty that day was in the officers, though many of them distinguished themselves by their gallant behaviour. The soldiers generally showed great spirit and resolution.”

Surely, I need not waste many words in demonstrating the great weight and value which must belong to the result of an inquiry made by the Commander-in-Chief—and such a Commander-in-Chief as Washington—into the conduct of his officers in a battle, only a few days after the battle has been fought. Is not this a passage which every future historian of Bunker’s Hill has a right to be apprised of, and ought to bear in mind?

Of several of these omissions, as derived from a comparison of your work with Mr. Force’s, I have already complained, in divers passages of my sixth volume (especially at pages 60. and 66.); but these passages not having been extracted in the New York paper, which alone you had seen at the time of your published “Letters,” are, of course, not adverted to in your reply. I should be sorry if it were thought that I desired, by the production of such omitted phrases, to deny the unquestionable merits of the New England States in their Revolutionary War. But I did consider it requisite to prove—and the more so since, as I venture to think, the fact is too often overlooked on your side of the Atlantic—that their cause, like every other cause, had its dark as well as its bright side. And if you, as the Editor of Washington’s Correspondence, are shown to leave out systematically those facts or those opinions by which the dark side is to be proved, then I, for my part, must continue to maintain that you, Sir, have, according to my former words, “tampered with the truth of history.”

Perhaps I may hold too strong opinions on this subject. But it is a subject on which I have had to think earnestly and often. It is a subject on which my thoughts, at all events, ought not to be rash or immature. My good fortune has enabled me, in the course of my life, to become entrusted with several important manuscript collections; and my bounden duty has been to consider how most properly to use them. The Stuart Papers—namely,

the entire correspondence of our exiled princes — were placed at my disposal by the favour of His late Majesty William IV. Most confidential letters — comprising his communications with his Sovereign and with his Colleagues — were bequeathed to me, in conjunction with another gentleman, by the confidence of the late Sir Robert Peel.

If I could hope that the confidence of that great statesman — who was nobly ambitious of fame, but who desired only Truth for its foundation — if, I say, his confidence, and the very many years that have now passed since I first applied myself to historical researches, could give me any claim to address a few words of warning to those far younger men in North America who are now commencing such researches, and may become hereafter historians of their country, — if I could hope that what is meant as friendly counsel would not be resented as unauthorised intrusion, I would say to them, “You are far too great a nation, and have far too high a des-  
“tiny before you, for all these little devices of suppres-  
“sion and concealment. Be less vain and more proud!  
“Show yourselves as you really are! Publish your  
“State Papers as you find them! Do not in the West  
“treat the characters of your great men as in the East  
“they treat the persons of their Haram slaves! And  
“be assured that by such a system you will not at the  
“end find yourselves the losers. With you, as with  
“us, there may, no doubt, come to light after the  
“lapse of years, many low motives and many unworthy  
“actions, which, on a different system, might still be  
“hidden from the world. But, on the other hand, you  
“will be able to portray as they really were, and with  
“Truth’s own inimitable colours, thoughts of the highest  
“patriotism, and deeds of the highest virtue!”

But, Sir, further still, and with respect to your particular omissions, I do not think that you can be sufficiently aware of the general effect which a knowledge of them produces. They tend to cast a shade of distrust over your entire work. Let me give a single instance of this as derived from my own experience. Mr. Adolphus, touching upon the non-fulfilment of the Convention of Saratoga by the American Congress, and writing, be it

observed, half a century nearer the time of these events, when he might be able to converse with some of the principal actors in them, states that "Washington remonstrated with force and firmness against this "national act of dishonour." Now, on referring to your pages, I found, as I have noticed in my History (at vol. vi. p. 197.), that Washington alludes to the transaction "with the utmost brevity and dryness, and, as it "seems to me, distaste." But I found no such remonstrance as Mr. Adolphus mentions. Am I, then, to be blamed if I feel, or if feeling I express, my suspicion that these words of remonstrance also may have been among the passages which you suppress?

On reviewing, then, the whole of our controversy, and fully acknowledging that I cannot be a competent judge in my own case, I yet indulge the hope that I have not been guilty of any injustice towards you beyond that into which I was misled by the inadvertency in the volumes of Mr. William Reed. There is, however, another injustice committed by me in the first edition of my recent volumes, which is not at all connected with you, but which I am anxious to take this opportunity to acknowledge and explain. At page 109. of my sixth volume, speaking of the year 1776, I had made a passing reference to General Greene, as just entrusted by Washington with the command at Brooklyn, and as being then "an officer of bravery and enterprise, "but of intemperate habits," and for this latter statement I alleged in my note my authority, namely, the Memoir by the Marquis de La Fayette. Of course, even as a mere passing reader of the American War, I could be no stranger to the eminent services and merits of General Greene, merits which (but at a much later period than 1776) seem to me, in a military sense, and on the American side, inferior to those of Washington alone; and I proposed to myself, when I should come to what I deemed a more fitting time, to commemorate those merits as I think that they deserve. But, meanwhile, it seemed to me not uninteresting, nor yet below the dignity of history, to notice what appeared to be the early vice of an officer afterwards so highly distinguished; a vice recorded, as I thought, on the unimpeachable testimony of his personal friend, the Marquis de La Fayette. All



through my History it has been my maxim to aim at strict historical justice, and on no account to shrink from unveiling, if fully proved, the faults or frailties of eminent men.

The passage on which I relied in La Fayette is to be found at vol. i. p. 21. of his "Memoirs and Correspondence," ed. 1837. Speaking of the American officers at that early period, he says :

"Lord Stirling, plus brave que judicieux, un autre Général souvent ivre, Greene, dont les talens n'étaient encore connus que de ses amis commandaient en qualité de Major Généraux."

In my own note I cited the volume and page where this passage might be found, but I did not cite the passage itself at full length, and for the following reason ;—that at another place in my History, concerning the battle of the Brandywine (vol. vi., p. 160.), I had occasion to quote the clause relating to the titular Lord Stirling ; that I did not wish to quote the same clause twice over ; and that, if the clause were omitted, there would be awkwardness and obscurity in commencing the earlier quotation with the words "un autre Général." But I never entertained the shadow of a doubt that La Fayette was here speaking of two and only two persons, that he was describing, first, Stirling as brave but unskilful, and, secondly, Greene as an officer of intemperate habits, whose rising talents were as yet known only to his friends. It seemed to me, so far as I may be allowed to express any opinion on a foreign language, that had he designed to speak of three persons, the particle "et," as connecting the two last, would have been more consonant to what we are accustomed to observe in the French writings. It seemed to me, also, that there was a certain congruity or probability in La Fayette making this confession respecting the youthful fault of his American comrade, since in another passage of his Memoirs, we find him not unwilling to make a similar confession of himself. That later passage of his Memoirs, which will be found cited at length at vol. vi. p. 255. of my History, ascribes a violent fever with which he was seized at Fishkill, in some degree, at least, to his previous want of moderation in wine and rum.

I now find, however, that I had wholly mistaken La Fayette. Some private communications which I not long since received from distinguished men of letters and personal friends of my own in the United States, have convinced me that, in the first passage which I cited, La Fayette intended to refer not to two officers but to three, suppressing from delicacy the name of that General who was shortly afterwards, from his continued habit of intemperance, dismissed the American service. Both the name and the fact are now made known to me, and thus is General Greene thoroughly exonerated from the charge which I advanced. I can scarcely express the concern with which I made the discovery that, for the first time, so far as I know or hope, in my literary course, I should have been the means of bringing forward against a highly meritorious man an utterly unfounded accusation. If, in doing so, I have (as is but too probable) caused any pain to the family or friends of General Greene, let them be assured that their pain cannot have been greater than my own, and let me entreat their candid consideration of the circumstances, as I have now detailed them, by which my error was unfortunately caused.

I shall also be sorry if this passage, taken singly or on rumour, shall induce any persons in America to ascribe to me an acrimonious and censorious spirit towards their principal commanders. I do not think that it has been so considered in this country. Those Americans, however, who may choose to look into my volumes will, of course, judge of that point for themselves. But there is one thing touching it which I may be here allowed to mention, because I think that, on the other side of the Atlantic, it has not been noticed, or not been clearly understood. Whenever I have had to make any statement, bearing in any degree against any man or body of men in the American States, I have I believe, almost invariably derived, and in my notes sought to establish it, either from the words of a bystander and looker-on, or from some strong authority on the Americans' side. I have drawn it from subsequent historians of their country or their party, such as Dr. Gordon, Mr. Ramsay, and Mr. Grahame; or from contemporary letter-writers, such as Washington, Franklin, and John Adams. I thought, as an Englishman in birth and in feeling, that the facts, if

I concurred in them, which I gathered in the foreign camp, would be far more satisfactory and convincing to my readers than any I could gather in my own. On this ground, in my accounts of the disturbances and Revolutionary War, I have thought it best to make but very sparing use of the writers upon the loyal side. Hutchinson's History has not been quoted by me on a single occasion,—a fact which I observe has afforded to a recent critic in your country a proof (sufficient at least for his own conviction) that I had never seen, or never heard of, that work! But if you, Sir, after writing an answer to the small portion of my History, which you saw extracted, have since done me the further honour to read the rest, you will have found that my passing over any citation from Hutchinson was rather part of a rule or system. In like manner I have but twice, or thrice, I think, quoted from Stedman's History, the first time (vol. v. p. 319.) only to correct an error he commits, relating to an English Act of Parliament; and the second time (vol. vi. p. 37.) only to illustrate what is not controverted on the other side—the utterly exhausted state of the English soldiers, from their protracted march on the day of Lexington — “their tongues,” says the Commissary, “hanging out of their mouths like those of dogs after a chase!”

If, therefore, in speaking of the years 1775 and 1776, I have put forward any statements unfavourable to any person or persons in New England, I can only say that I have done so for the most part on the authority of the Commander in Chief of the New England troops. No doubt it may be possible, with a little ingenuity, to take exception, on your side of the Atlantic, to the words even of so accurate and so truthful a man as Washington. It may be possible, if he wrote immediately after the events, to say that his mind was biassed in some degree by temporary spleen and irritation. It may be possible, if he wrote at a later period, to say that his memory had failed him as to the minute details of bygone days. But still I am not convinced that the testimonies I alleged have been otherwise than most fairly chosen.

But let me now conclude. Though we are not acquainted, I am unwilling to part from you or from any other gentleman with whom I may be engaged in contro-

versy, with any unkindly feeling or discourteous expression on my part. Allow me, therefore, in conclusion, to assure you, as I can with perfect truth, that widely as we differ on the privileges and the duties appertaining to an Editor, that difference does not prevent me from recognising and respecting your high attainments, your unwearied industry, and the valuable service which, in many of your notes and illustrations, you have rendered to the cause of historic truth.

I have the honour to be,

SIR,

Your very obedient Servant,

MAHON.

*Chevening, Kent,  
August, 1852.*

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Since this pamphlet first appeared, and in consequence of the controversies in which it bears a part, Mr. William Reed, with great judgment and propriety, resolved to publish, word for word, and syllable for syllable, from the MSS. the correspondence addressed to his ancestor by Washington, retaining even the errors in the spelling and noting in the margin whatever alterations Mr. Sparks has made. Of that work as now before me (Philadelphia, 1852) any reader will be able for himself to decide whether it fails to confirm to the fullest extent the allegations of supposed "embellishments" which I thought it right to make. On the other hand, it completely exonerates Mr. Sparks from the second and last instance of the "additions" which I had imputed, in the letter namely of Dec. 15. 1775, where the substitution of "I cannot say that I am sorry" for "I can only say that I am sorry" was, it now appears, made by accident in the biography of Reed, and is not borne out by the MS. original.

There has also appeared in America another pamphlet by Mr. Sparks (dated Cambridge, October 25. 1852), as an answer to mine. Into the general argument I do not propose to enter again. I will only observe that in one place (p. 39.) Mr. Sparks distinctly denies having suppressed any letter or passage which showed that Wash-

ington, as Mr. Adolphus tells us, "remonstrated with force" and firmness" against the non-fulfilment of the Saratoga Convention. Most fully relying, as I know that I have good reason to do, on Mr. Sparks's personal honour and integrity, I at once retract the suspicions which I had expressed upon that subject. But I can by no means concur with him in thinking that these suspicions were sufficiently disproved by the mere perusal of the London edition of Washington's "Official Letters" as published in 1795. This old collection, as the very title indicates, is of course far less extensive and valuable than that of Mr. Sparks, who had not merely the official but a great variety of private letters at his command. It therefore seemed to me perfectly reasonable to infer that some passages in Washington's confidential correspondence, not of course to be found in his "Official Letters," but which both Mr. Adolphus and Mr. Sparks had seen in MS. and which Mr. Sparks might have inserted if he pleased, were the source (and I can guess no other) of that "remonstrance" which Mr. Adolphus has alleged in such positive terms. All these surmises, however, are fully and for ever set at rest in my mind by Mr. Sparks's direct assertion to the contrary.

*June 1853.*

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LIEUT.-COL. SMITH TO GOVERNOR GAGE.

[State Paper Office.]

*Boston, April 22. 1775.*

SIR,

In obedience to your Excellency's commands, I marched on the evening of the 18th inst. with the corps of grenadiers and light infantry for Concord, to execute your Excellency's orders with respect to destroying all ammunition, artillery, tents, &c., collected there, which was effected, having knocked off the trunnions of three pieces of iron ordnance, some new gun carriages, a great number of carriage wheels burnt, a considerable quantity

of flour, some gunpowder and musquet balls, with other small articles thrown into the river. Notwithstanding we marched with the utmost expedition and secrecy, we found the country had intelligence or strong suspicion of our coming, and fired many signal guns, and rung the alarm bells repeatedly; and were informed, when at Concord, that some cannon had been taken out of the town that day, that others, with some stores, had been carried three days before, which prevented our having an opportunity of destroying so much as might have been expected at our first setting off.

I think it proper to observe, that when I had got some miles on the march from Boston, I detached six light infantry companies to march with all expedition to seize the two bridges on different roads beyond Concord. On these companies' arrival at Lexington, I understand, from the report of Major Pitcairn, who was with them, and from many officers, that they found on a green close to the road a body of the country people drawn up in military order, with arms and accoutrements, and, as appeared after, loaded; and that they had posted some men in a dwelling and Meeting-house. Our troops advanced towards them, without any intention of injuring them, further than to inquire the reason of their being thus assembled, and, if not satisfactory, to have secured their arms; but they in confusion went off, principally to the left, only one of them fired before he went off, and three or four more jumped over a wall and fired from behind it among the soldiers; on which the troops returned it, and killed several of them. They likewise fired on the soldiers from the Meeting and dwelling-house. We had one man wounded, and Major Pitcairn's horse shot in two places. Rather earlier than this, on the road, a countryman from behind a wall had snapped his piece at Lieutenants Adair and Sutherland, but it flashed and did not go off. After this we saw some in the woods, but marched on to Concord without anything further happening. While at Concord we saw vast numbers assembling in many parts; at one of the bridges they marched down, with a very considerable body, on the light infantry posted there. On their coming pretty near, one of our men fired on them, which they returned; on which



an action ensued, and some few were killed and wounded. In this affair, it appears that after the bridge was quitted, they scalped and otherwise ill-treated one or two of the men who were either killed or severely wounded, being seen by a party that marched by soon after. At Concord we found very few inhabitants in the town; those we met with both Major Pitcairn and myself took all possible pains to convince that we meant them no injury, and that if they opened their doors when required to search for military stores, not the slightest mischief would be done. We had opportunities of convincing them of our good intentions, but they were sulky; and one of them even struck Major Pitcairn. On our leaving Concord to return to Boston, they began to fire on us from behind the walls, ditches, trees, &c., which, as we marched, increased to a very great degree, and continued without the intermission of five minutes altogether, for, I believe, upwards of eighteen miles; so that I can't think but it must have been a preconcerted scheme in them, to attack the King's troops the first favourable opportunity that offered, otherwise, I think they could not, in so short a time as from our marching out, have raised such a numerous body, and for so great a space of ground. Notwithstanding the enemy's numbers, they did not make one gallant attempt during so long an action, though our men were so very much fatigued, but kept under cover.

I have the honour, &c.

F. SMITH, Lt.-Col. 10th Foot.

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EDW<sup>d</sup>. GIBBON, ESQ., TO EDW<sup>d</sup>. ELIOT, ESQ.

[Eliot MSS.]

(*Extract.*)

*London, May 31. 1775.*

You have seen by the papers the unpleasant news from America; unpleasant, as a single drop of blood may be considered as the signal of civil war. For otherwise it was not an engagement, much less a defeat. The King's troops were ordered to destroy a magazine at Con-

cord. They marched, did their business, and returned ; but they were frequently fired at from behind stone walls, and from the windows in the villages. It was to those houses they were obliged to set fire. Ensign Gould (of Northamptonshire) had been left with twelve men to guard a bridge, and was taken prisoner. The next day, the Provincial Congress sent a vessel, without her freight, express to England ; no letters were put on board but their own, nor did the crew know their destination till they were on the banks of Newfoundland ; so that Government has not any authentic account. The master says that the day after the engagement the country rose, and that he left Boston invested by 1500 tents, with cannon, and under the command of Colonel Ward, who was at the head of a provincial regiment in the last war ; but unless fanaticism gets the better of self-preservation, they must soon disperse, as it is the season for sowing their Indian corn, the chief sustenance of New England. Such, at least, is the opinion of Governor Hutchinson, from whom I have these particulars.

#### NOTE ON THE BATTLE OF BUNKER'S HILL.

Since the first edition of this volume I have observed with some surprise a high authority on the other side of the Atlantic offer a most positive denial to my statement (at page 58.) that "some of the Americans even to the present day have claimed the battle of Bunker's Hill as "a victory." I should have deemed the mere construction of the stately monument upon the site of the battle as almost a sufficient proof of this statement, since such monuments are not usually raised by the vanquished or by those who own themselves to be so.

In fact, however, on examining the publications of divers travellers in North America, it appears unquestionable that many persons, at least in Massachusetts, are in the habit not merely of claiming the victory, but of indulging in great exaggerations concerning it.

Some instances, now to be adduced, will fully establish this conclusion.

Mr. Fearon seems to have been assured by the young gentleman, a native he says of the town of Boston, who walked with him to Bunker's Hill, that the battle had been an American victory; and as such he inserts it without doubt or misgiving in his narrative. Here are his words: "The spot is sacred to patriotism and to liberty. The hill is of moderate height. The monument placed here in commemoration of the victory is of brick and wood," &c.\*

Captain Thomas Hamilton, as we may conclude, was told by some of his Boston friends that the genius of the Commander-in-chief, though distant, had directed and animated the operations of that day, and that Bunker's Hill therefore was an element in Washington's glory. At least I do not see what other information he can have received, judging from his words on Bunker's Hill. "On the summit of this height a monument to the memory of Washington was in progress."†

Miss Martineau, in her "Retrospect of Western Travels," shows with what extraordinary amplification the authorities on which she relied must have described to her this battle. She says of it: "They (the English) lost more officers than the Americans had men engaged!" And in the same passage she adds: "The glory of the Bunker Hill struggle is immortal in the hearts of the nation."‡

Not less to the point are the words of another accomplished lady, Mrs. Houston, during her visit to Boston. "The Yankees, notwithstanding their repulse, still flatter themselves that in the hard-fought battle they had the best of it."§

It is to be observed that the very widest differences of opinion prevail among the American writers on nearly all the details recorded of this battle. Thus some later authorities allege that when Doctor, or General, Joseph Warren joined the troops upon Breed's Hill, "he went alone, with his musket on his shoulder."|| But in my

\* Sketches in America, p. 109. ed. 1818.

† Men and Manners in America, by the author of Cyril Thornton, vol. i. p. 170. ed. 1833.

‡ Retrospect of Western Travel, vol. iii. p. 54. ed. 1838.

§ Hesperos, by Mrs. Houstoun, vol. i. p. 56.

|| See the North American Review, July 1852.

narrative I have followed, and shall continue to follow, the statement of Chief Justice Marshall that "during this interval the Americans also were reinforced by a body of their countrymen led by General Warren and Pomeroy."\*

Nor are the American writers by any means agreed who on their side commanded in chief at Bunker's Hill. This question may be seen more fully treated in a volume of great industry and merit which has come into my hands since the publication of my own: "the History of the Siege of Boston by Richard Frothingham, the second edition, Boston, 1851," kindly transmitted to me by George Ticknor, Esq.

Here are some few of the many conflicting authorities upon this question, as they are drawn out in array by Mr. Frothingham between the pages 372. and 381. of his book.

Mr. John Adams, the second President of the United States, in a letter dated June 19. 1818, declares that the army had no Commander-in-chief, but that he always understood that General Pomeroy was the first officer of Massachusetts on Bunker or Breed's Hill.

Mr. Webster was the author of an article entitled "Battle of Bunker's Hill" which appeared in the North American Review for July 1818. This article contends that "General Putnam commanded at the rail-fence and on Bunker's Hill, while Prescott commanded in the redoubt."

On the other hand, in October of the same year (1818) Mr. David Lee Child published in the Boston Patriot another article on the same transaction. Its main object is to establish the point that "General Putnam was not in any part of the battle of Bunker or Breed's Hill."

George's Cambridge Almanack or Essex Calendar for 1776 contains a brief narrative of the battle, in which it is stated that Joseph Warren "was commander-in-chief on this occasion."

Thus also Governor Trumbull, in his letter dated August 31. 1779, gives a sketch of the battle and names General Warren as the commanding officer.

General Henry Dearborn, who commanded a company

\* Life of Washington, vol. ii. p. 210. ed. 1805

during the action in Stark's regiment, wrote an account of it for "the Portfolio" of March 1818. In this he declares that "during the action no officer but Colonel Stark gave any orders."

Lee's Memoirs of the War in the Southern Department, published in 1812, state that in this battle the Americans were commanded by Colonel Prescott. He does not even mention Putnam's name.

The same assertion as to Colonel Prescott is made in Tudor's Life of Otis published in 1823. On the other hand, Mr. Frothingham, in noticing Gordon's History, of which the Preface is dated in 1788, bids us observe: "This is the first time Colonel Prescott appears, in print, "as the commander of the intrenching party."

With such irreconcilable differences among the best American writers it seems scarcely just to blame an English one, who may incline to any among these various opinions, or who (as in my own case) refrains from naming any American officer as having had the chief command in the battle of Bunker's Hill.

Nevertheless, there is no doubt, whatever may have been Colonel Prescott's exact measure of authority, that his conduct at the redoubt was in a high degree gallant and praiseworthy. He was the grandfather of Mr. William Prescott, the excellent historian of Ferdinand and Isabella, of Cortez, and of Pizarro, a gentleman whose high abilities and most agreeable manners were well appreciated and will long be remembered in England. We learn from the Frothingham volume (p. 168.) that Mr. William Prescott descends, on the mother's side, from Captain Linzee, an officer engaged with the British on the day of Bunker's Hill; and the swords borne by both these brave men on opposite sides in the same conflict "are now "crossed on the walls of the fine library of the historian."

*June, 1853.*

**M.**

## LORD NORTH TO THE DUKE OF GRAFTON.

On August 31. 1775, the Duke of Grafton had written to Lord North, urging conciliation with America, and asking, "If Parliament meets early, might not the two Houses address his Majesty that orders should be given to his General to communicate to the rebel army that, from various motives of tenderness, affection, and humanity, no hostile steps should be taken until the issue should be known, in case the Colonies would depute persons to state to Parliament their wishes and expectations?"

To that letter, after seven weeks, the Duke received the following reply:—

*Downing Street, Oct. 20. 1775.*

MY DEAR LORD,

I DEFERRED answering your Grace's very obliging and friendly letter till I could, with a tolerable degree of certainty, convey to you the general outline of our American plan. For that purpose, I take the liberty of enclosing a draft of the King's Speech, which is now so nearly completed, that it will, I believe, undergo very few alterations before it is delivered in Parliament. It is longer and fuller than Speeches at the opening of Sessions have usually been, because it was intended to give a general plan of the measures to be pursued against the American rebels.

Your humble servant, and, I believe I may add, his Majesty's other counsellors, still remain ready to agree with any province in America upon the footing of the Resolution of the House of Commons of the 27th of February last. But the leaders of the rebellion in the Colonies plainly declare themselves not satisfied with those conditions, and manifestly aim at a total independence. Against this we propose to exert ourselves, using every species of force to reduce them; but authorising, at the same time, either the Commander-in-Chief, or some other Commissioner, to proclaim immediately peace and pardon, and to restore all the privileges of trade, to any Colony upon its submission. Authority will likewise be given to settle the question of taxation for the future



upon the plan held forth last year, and to put every other matter now in dispute between them and this country in a course of accommodation. Till the provinces have made some submission, it will be in vain to hope that they will come into any reasonable terms, and I am afraid that declaring a cessation of arms, at this time, would establish that independence which the leaders of the faction in America have always intended, and which they now almost openly avow. I beg pardon of your Grace for touching on these matters so slightly and superficially, but I shall be glad of an opportunity of going into the business more largely when your Grace comes to town. In the meanwhile, I must desire you not to communicate the inclosed speech to any one, as it is not yet entirely perfect, and has not been finally settled in the Cabinet.

I have the honour to be, &c.

NORTH.

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RIGHT HON. JAMES GRENVILLE TO LORD MAHON.

*Butleigh, Nov. 29. 1775.*

I REJOICE, my dear Lord, that you and your companion returned safe and well from your expedition to Bath. Certainly I committed a sad blunder in inviting you to come so far, at such a season of the year, to participate of so poor an entertainment. I am now told the reasons of our disappointment; but I should have better known them before. The greater part of our worthy friends in the Corporation, with all their bluster of virtue, public spirit, and disinterestedness, were, it seems, overwhelmed in debts to their late representative, Mr. Smith. His executors, not having the same reasons for acquiescence with their principal, have called upon some of them to discharge, not their consciences by their votes, but their bonds by an early payment. This has occasioned a transfer of stock privately transacted with their present member, who succeeds to his predecessor's bonds and seat, though not to his Parliamentary conduct. If the parties had been, what they were not, free to choose, I have still reason to believe you would have been their choice. They could not have made a better; and my endeavour

would not have proved abortive, but expense, pride, pleasure, and dissipation make havoc everywhere; and no nation upon earth is more enslaved than this. I wish that even the Gentle Dove of Worcester may have none of its feathers ruffled! You will probably think that I have a bad hand at pointing out the road that leads successfully to a seat in Parliament, where I most heartily wish to see you placed, for reasons very different from my friends at Bath. However, permit me to mention it to you, though it is not entirely suited to your temper and genius: Be deaf to the call of every principle in human society; be fond of shedding blood, of inciting the slave to murder his master in his sleep, of arming savages to kill the child, and to tear the flesh from the head of the mother; swear and forswear that 250 are more than 1100 or 1,100,000! Do this and be ready to do every thing else, and you shall infallibly succeed in getting into Parliament. I thought it proper for me to submit these few hints to your consideration by way of compensation (as they are very valuable) for the unlucky trouble I lately gave you. If you pardon it for my good intentions, no harm is done, and all is well.

I am very sorry to learn from your accounts, and from those I have lately received from Hayes, that there is no amendment yet made in the state of Lord Chatham's health;

And remain ever yours, &c.

JAMES GRENVILLE.

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MR. FOX TO THE DUKE OF GRAFTON.

*London, December 4. 1775.*

MY DEAR LORD,

As your Grace seemed to wish to be informed of anything of moment that might be going forward during your absence, I think it right to inclose you the Bill which has been read a second time in our House, and which we are to have in the Committee to-morrow. Upon reading this Bill you will see in a moment that it contains the whole of the business of the Session, and therefore I own I think it ought not to go through the

House of Lords without any remarks upon it. It puts us in a state of complete war with America, and, by the plunder it encourages, it seems to sow the seed of a perpetual enmity with those with whom all parties propose friendship and intercourse.

The two last provisions of it avowedly contain all that Parliament is to do with respect to the Commissioners, so that you see how little we are to know of the destinations and instructions of those to whom the whole power of this country is entrusted. It certainly cannot come into the House of Lords before the beginning of next week, and what opposition is intended to it then I really do not know, but clearly think there ought to be some. There are many objections I have not touched upon, particularly that of giving the whole trade into the power of the West Indian Governors. We do not yet know who are intended to be sent as Commissioners. The report is that Lord Howe is to be one. I thought it necessary, my dear Lord, to write to you upon this subject early, because I should imagine that, with regard to the opposition in the House of Lords, much would depend upon your opinion, which I should be very glad to know. Though I wrote this letter merely with a view of acquainting you with the state of this Bill, I cannot let this opportunity go by, of assuring you how very happy I feel to be of opinion, on public affairs, with a person with whom I have always wished to agree, and with whom I should act with more pleasure in any possible situation than with any one I have been acquainted with. There is a report of an engagement at Bunker's Hill, in which the Provincials are said to have had an advantage; but I believe it to be without foundation.

I am, my dear Lord, yours ever very sincerely,  
C. J. Fox.

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MR. FOX TO THE DUKE OF GRAFTON.

*London, December 12. 1775.*

MY DEAR LORD,

As you expressed a wish to know the day on which the "Prohibitory Bill," as it is called, was to be debated,

Lord Rockingham is just going to send to you for that purpose, and he seems to wish me to write at the same time. I have really but little to add to what I wrote your Grace upon that subject before. I will only observe that if you read the Bill attentively, you will find there are some circumstances in it that are rather new, particularly the confounding of all West Indian, and even British property, with American, if happening to be on board an American vessel.

The Duke of Richmond will certainly be in town, and, I suppose, the Duke of Manchester. With regard to the other Lords of the description you allude to, I really know nothing; but I should suppose Lord Shelburne will be there, as he is in town. Upon all these circumstances, your Grace must judge of the propriety of coming or staying; I will only say, that whatever part you take, I for one shall never attribute it to any want of zeal in a cause which, the moment it is seen in the light in which we see it, must appear to be the greatest that ever engaged any men.

I shall certainly do myself the honour of paying my respects to your Grace at Euston during the recess; but Harbinger has been so ill, that I am afraid I cannot assist you in making a sweepstakes.

I am, my dear Lord, yours ever very sincerely,  
C. J. Fox.

#### CHARGE OF PECULATION AGAINST MR. SAMUEL ADAMS.

WITH respect to the charge which Dr. Gordon has brought against Mr. Samuel Adams, and which I have quoted in Chap. LIV., I have been enabled, through the kindness of an American friend, himself of high literary eminence, to ascertain, by private letters addressed to him for my information, the judgment which two of the principal writers and historical critics now living in the United States have formed. One of them (who has since obtained attested copies of some of the original accounts) is, I find, clear and positive in his denial, the

other less decided. Both of them, however, are equally convinced that there was no intentional corruption or embezzlement; and the latter gentleman observes:—“The worst that can be made of the case is, that Adams was as careless of the public money as of his own.”

It is certainly true, as urged by the former gentleman, that the authority of Dr. Gordon does not rank high on any disputed point, and that several inaccurate statements may be proved against him; yet, on the other hand, it seems to me that any historian, however humble, must have considerable *primâ facie* weight whenever he makes admissions against the party which he zealously and sincerely espouses.

Mr. Samuel Adams, while at the seat of Congress, appears to have lived very plainly and at slight expense; and his traditional character at this day in the United States, as we may learn from Mr. Everett's address on the anniversary of Lexington, is that of “incorruptible poverty.” The Marquis de Chastellux, who went to visit him at Philadelphia in 1780, describes the meanness of his aspect—“son extérieur simple et mesquin;” which, he says, “semble fait pour contraster avec la force et l'étendue de ses pensées.” (*Voyage*, vol. i. p. 182.) I observe that Mr. John Adams, in one passage of his secret Diary, praises his kinsman for “steadfast integrity,” and “real as well as professed piety.” (December 23. 1765.) But in a later entry I find the following:—“Mr. Adams was more cool, genteel, and agreeable, than common; concealed and restrained his passions. He affects to despise riches, and not to dread poverty; but no man is more ambitious of entertaining his friends handsomely, or of making a decent and elegant appearance than he. He has lately new-covered and glazed his house (at Boston); and has new-papered, painted, and furnished his rooms &c.” (December 30. 1772. See his Works, vol. ii. pp. 163. 308. ed. 1850.)

July, 1851.

M.

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## LORD CHATHAM AND THE DUKE OF GRAFTON.

[From the Duke of Grafton's MS. Memoirs.]

LORD CHATHAM, though wrapped in flannel, came down to the House of Lords on the 30th May, 1777. . . He spoke with his usual spirit, and appeared to want no force of reasoning in recommending his measure. On this occasion it was particularly grateful to me to perceive that Lord Chatham was disposed to treat me with all the attention and confidence I could wish, in consequence of some conversations I understood Lord Camden and his Lordship had on the whole of my conduct.

Without a word said on the past, I found him perfectly open and communicative to me directly; and so we remained towards each other as long as Lord Chatham lived.

Previously to the meeting of Parliament, November, 1777, on my coming to London, I received the note following from Lord Chatham, which I give with the more satisfaction, as it completely demonstrates (contrary to the insinuations of many) that there subsisted an established good understanding between us.

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“Lord Chatham presents his respects to the Duke of Grafton, and begs leave to trouble his Grace with the enclosed motion, intended for the first day in the House of Lords. If fears for the public, and unfeigned respect for the Duke of Grafton, may be an apology, this liberty will find pardon.”

*Hayes, Tuesday night, (Nov. 18. 1777).*

“His Grace will perceive the motion is simple, and avoids all entanglement of detail.”

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It would be useless to attempt to describe to you the brilliancy of Lord Chatham's powers as an orator on this memorable occasion, for no relation can give more than



a faint idea of what he really displayed. In this debate he exceeded all that I had ever admired in his speaking. Nothing could be more eloquent and striking than the arguments and language of his Lordship's first speech on moving the amendment proposed, or which might be properly called a new Address. But in Lord Chatham's reply to Lord Suffolk's inhuman position, "that, besides the policy and necessity of employing Indian savages in the war, the measure also was allowable on principle, as it was perfectly justifiable to use every means that God and nature had put into our hands," he started up with a degree of indignation that added to the force of the sudden and unexampled burst of eloquence, which must have affected any audience, and which appeared to me to surpass all that we have ever heard of the celebrated orators of Greece or Rome.

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MR. FOX TO THE DUKE OF GRAFTON.

*London, Dec. 12. 1777.*

MY DEAR LORD,

YOU have long before this heard of Burgoyne's surrender, with all the circumstances attending it. You will easily guess the effect produced here by such an event upon the public. But the manner and conduct of his Majesty's principal servants, would, I believe, astonish you. Lord Suffolk chose but yesterday to talk in a high tone of the *Vagrant Congress*, as he called it; and though Lord North hinted at terms to be now offered to America, yet he affected to talk language of great firmness with respect to himself, and gave very strong assurance to his friends that he would not quit his situation. To corroborate the language, and to hold out to the public that no negotiation would be attempted with any part of Opposition, Lord Jersey and Hopkins are turned out, and their places filled, as you will see by the papers. This is their idea of firmness; and the preliminary step they take towards conciliation with the Colonies, is to show a determined spirit of persecution against all who ever entertained an idea of that sort, because they were beat

into it. To do the public justice, I do really believe that the Ministers are held in the most universal contempt, both by friends and enemies ; but I do not see yet so much mixture of indignation with that contempt as I expected. I hope to do myself the honour of waiting upon you in the course of next week, and of talking over more at large the very singular and critical state of this country.

I am, &c.,

C. J. Fox.

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MR. FOX TO THE DUKE OF GRAFTON.

*London, Dec. 16. 1777.*

MY DEAR LORD,

As the Gazette of to-night is not likely to come out time enough to go by the post, I write this to let you know (what you probably will have heard from others) that an officer arrived last night from Burgoyne, by way of Quebec. He brings letters from Burgoyne, dated October 20th, Albany, confirming all we had before heard. These letters are to be printed out at length by the particular desire of the General and his friends here, though I understand there are passages in them which our Government won't much like to publish ; for if I am not mistaken, the orders given for advancing at all hazards, will be stated to have been so peremptory, that the General did not think himself at liberty even to call a Council of War upon the subject of retreating.

Lord Petersham is expected daily with a duplicate of these dispatches by way of New York. He is spoken of in the highest terms in all Burgoyne's. Pray remember me to Vernon if he is with you. I was extremely sorry to hear he has been ill. I am afraid it will not be in my power to wait upon your Grace this week, as I intended, but it shall not be long before I have that honour.

I am, &c.,

C. J. Fox.

I enclose in another cover a letter I have received from a friend at Bristol, which was printed in a

hurry there. from a Boston newspaper and some manuscripts, which my friend has good reason to think authentic.

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LORD STORMONT TO LORD WEYMOUTH.

(*Most secret.*)

*Paris, Dec. 28. 1777.*

MY LORD,

IN my secret correspondence with your Lordship, I have frequently dwelt on the treacherous policy of this Court, and produced irrefragable proofs of it; yet I am sometimes afraid, my Lord, that I have not said enough on so important a subject, — have not painted things so strongly as I see them, — have not fully conveyed the impression they make upon my own mind. To obviate the possibility of being wanting in so essential a point of duty, I will beg your Lordship's indulgence whilst I state, as clearly and shortly as I can, the conclusion I have drawn from a variety of information which I have weighed with all the attention I can command.

I must then say, my Lord, and I say it with real pain, I have not a shadow of doubt that this Court and that of Madrid are combined against us, and have long been preparing, and still continue to prepare, for the execution of some insidious design. I look upon the assistance they give the rebels as but a small part of their plan. They feed the American War, in hopes that it will exhaust our strength, and that out of it some occasion will arise for them to strike a sudden and unexpected blow. There are but too many indications of their hostile designs; their naval force is already more than sufficient for every purpose of defence, and yet they are continually increasing it. M. Necker's last *arrêt* expressly avows an intended augmentation. Not long ago, the Chevalier de Baix gave in a plan to M. de Sartines *pour faire une guerre cruelle aux Anglais*; (the particulars of the plan I do not yet know). M. de Sartines' answer was: We must proceed cautiously, and hazard no attempt till we are thoroughly prepared. Where the first blow will be

aimed I cannot say, but am inclined to think it will be in the West Indies.

The general bent of the nation is more strongly for war than ever it has been within my remembrance; and M. de Maurepas may yield to the torrent, and, as many other timid Ministers have done before him, may plunge into violent measures from mere weakness and irresolution. In a word, my Lord, I consider the whole French Cabinet as hostile to us, with different degrees of violence and activity, according to their different tempers, characters, and views; but the spirit that animates them, and that would animate any probable successors they can have, is one and the same. I may safely say that not a day passes over me that does not bring something to strengthen this opinion. I would not therefore close this year's correspondence without conveying my sentiments to your Lordship in the clearest and most explicit terms I can find.

But to leave the future intentions, and speak of the actual conduct of this Court. *That* is certainly as unfriendly as possible, notwithstanding all their professions. My repeated representations have had no other effect than to put them more upon their guard in their manner of assisting and treating with the rebels. They do not now convey any thing material through M. Chaumont or Beaumarchais. Monsieur Gérard treats directly with Franklin and Deane. Lee is little trusted, and has not the real secret. M. Gérard goes to Passy in the night, and Franklin and Deane make him nightly visits at Versailles. These visits have been very frequent of late, and must no doubt have some material object.

I have the honour to be, &c.,  
STORMONT.

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LORD STORMONT TO LORD WEYMOUTH

(*Extract.*)

(*Most secret.*)

*Paris, Friday night, Feb. 6. 1778.*

I THINK I am now able to speak to your Lordship with

some precision with regard to the treaty between this Court and the rebels. My informer assures me it is *actually signed*; but Dr. Franklin, not thinking himself authorized to grant all the demands made by France, has signed *sub spe rati*.

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## LORD STORMONT TO LORD WEYMOUTH.

(*Most secret.*)

*Paris, Feb. 13. 1778.*

MY LORD,

THERE is now an almost universal persuasion here, that there does exist some treaty or convention between this Court and the rebels, and it is on that persuasion that the thinking men of this country rest their belief of the certainty of a speedy rupture between England and France. All the different intelligence I have been able to collect meets in the same central point, and is uniform as to the existence of some agreement entered into with the rebels, but differs as to the nature and extent of the engagements taken. According to that information, which for many reasons I give the preference to,—I mean, my Lord, that which appears to me the exactest of any,—France has made two treaties with the rebels; one merely commercial, the other a treaty of alliance. Both these treaties were, I am assured, actually signed on Friday the 6th instant by M. Gérard. acting as plenipotentiary from this Court, and by the commissioners from the Congress. This cannot have been done in consequence of an answer to the proposals sent by this Court to the Congress, as they were sent the last week in December; but the commissioners may have received fuller powers, or France may have gone greater lengths in order to get before us, and prevent a reconciliation with America. Whatever the reasons were, to the best of my judgment and belief, France has signed this treaty of alliance, and consequently has thrown the die. It seems scarce possible, under these circumstances, that a war between the two nations can be avoided, unless Congress

should disavow the commissioners, and refuse to ratify what they have signed.

If France has made a treaty of alliance with the rebels, of which I am at this moment as fully convinced as I can be of any thing that does not fall within my personal knowledge, it cannot, I think, be doubted that she has resolved to support her perfidy by open force. One informer tells me that a sudden attack on some part of His Majesty's dominions is an article in this treaty, but he did not say where France would aim the blow. In this situation, my Lord, which leaves us nothing but the choice of difficulties, it seems of infinite importance thoroughly to consider whether it is more safe, dignified, and wise for us to remain in our present state, with this war hanging over us, but with an uncertainty when the storm will burst, and where it will fall, or to endeavour to derive advantage, dignity, and the appearance of superior strength and vigour, by striking the first blow, by producing the numberless proofs we have of the perfidy of France, and ordering our fleets to avenge it. I only state premises, my Lord, without so much as attempting a conclusion.

I have the honour to be, &c.,  
STORMONT.

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LORD CAMDEN TO THE DUKE OF GRAFTON.

*N. B. Street, April 9. 1778.*

(THIS letter has been already published; first by Lord Brougham, in the "Law Review" for August, 1845, and afterwards by Lord Campbell, in his "Lives of the Chancellors." But it is so important, as giving by far the most authentic account of the celebrated closing scene of Lord Chatham (April 7. 1778), that I shall follow their example by extracting it, as they did, from the MS. Memoirs of the Duke of Grafton.)

MY DEAR LORD,  
I CANNOT help considering the little illness which pre-



vented your Grace from attending the House of Lords last Tuesday, to have been a piece of good fortune, as it kept you back from a scene that would have overwhelmed you with grief and melancholy, as it did me, and many others that were present; I mean Lord Chatham's fit, that seized him as he was attempting to rise and reply to the Duke of Richmond: he fell back upon his seat, and was to all appearance in the agonies of death. This threw the whole House into confusion; every person was upon his legs in a moment, hurrying from one place to another, some sending for assistance, others producing salts, and others reviving spirits. Many crowding about the Earl to observe his countenance; all affected; most part really concerned; and even those who might have felt a secret pleasure at the accident, yet put on the appearance of distress, except only the Earl of M. \*, who sat still, almost as much unmoved as the senseless body itself.

Dr. Brocklesby was the first physician that came; but Dr. Addington, in about an hour, was brought to him. He was carried into the Prince's Chamber, and laid upon the table, supported by pillows. The first motion of life that appeared, was an endeavour to vomit, and after he had discharged the load from his stomach, that probably brought on the seizure, he revived fast. Mr. Strutt prepared an apartment for him at his house, where he was carried as soon as he could with safety be removed. He slept remarkably well, and was quite recovered yesterday, though he continued in bed. I have not heard how he is

\* In the Lords' Journals for that day (April 7. 1778), Lord Marchmont and Lord Mansfield are the only "Earls of M." recorded as present. Lord Brougham believes that the person designated by Lord Camden was Lord Marchmont (*Law Review*, No. IV. p. 316.); but I concur with Lord Campbell in being fully persuaded that it could be only Lord Mansfield. (See the *Lives of the Chief Justices*, vol. ii. p. 507.) It may be further observed that Lord Chatham, in his last speech, had attacked Lord Mansfield on the old ground — his alleged early Jacobite leanings. Chatham had been arguing against the fears of a foreign invasion. "Of a Spanish invasion," he proceeded, "of a French invasion, of a Dutch invasion, many noble Lords may have read in history; and some Lords," here he looked keenly at Lord Mansfield, "may perhaps remember a Scotch invasion!"

to-day, but will keep my letter open till the evening, that your Grace may be informed how he goes on. I saw him in the Prince's Chamber, before he went into the House, and conversed a little with him; but such was the feeble state of his body, and, indeed, the distempered agitation of his mind, that I did forebode that his strength would certainly fail him before he had finished his speech. In truth, he was not in a condition to go abroad, and he was earnestly requested not to make the attempt; but your Grace knows how obstinate he is when he is resolved. He had a similar fit to this in the summer, like it in all respects, in the seizure, the retching, and the recovery; and after that fit, as if it had been the crisis of the disorder, he recovered fast, and grew to be in better health than I had known him for many years. Pray Heaven that this may be attended with no worse consequences!

The Earl spoke, but was not like himself; his speech faltered, his sentences broken, and his mind not master of itself. He made shift with difficulty to declare his opinion, but was not able to enforce it by argument. His words were shreds of unconnected eloquence, and flashes of the same fire which he, Prometheus-like, had stolen from Heaven, and were then returning to the place from whence they were taken. Your Grace sees even I, who am a mere prose man, am tempted to be poetical while I am discoursing of this extraordinary man's genius. The Duke of Richmond answered him, and I cannot help giving his Grace the commendation he deserves for his candour, courtesy, and liberal treatment of his illustrious adversary. The debate was adjourned till yesterday, and then the former subject was taken up by Lord Shelburne, in a speech of one hour and three-quarters. The Duke of Richmond answered; Shelburne replied; and the Duke, who enjoys the privilege of the last word in that House, closed the business, no other Lord, except our friend Lord Ravensworth, speaking one word; the two other noble Lords consumed between three and four hours.

And now, my dear Lord, you must with me lament this fatal accident; I fear it is *fatal*, and this great man is now lost for ever to the public; for after such a public and notorious exposure of his decline, no man will look up to him even if he should recover. France will no

longer fear him, nor the King of England court him; and the present set of Ministers will finish the ruin of the country, because he being in effect superannuated, the public will call for no other men. This is my melancholy reflection. The Opposition, however, is not broken, and this difference of opinion will wear off; so far, at least, the prospect is favourable. I think I shall not sign the protest, though in other respects I shall be very friendly. I have troubled your Grace with a deal of stuff, but the importance of the subject will excuse me. Jack will have the honour of spending his Easter at Euston. Is Lord Euston to have a commission in the Militia? I have endeavoured to dissuade my son. I thank your Grace for the plover's eggs; it is plain you think me an epicure!

I have hardly room to present my respectful compliments to the Duchess, and to subscribe myself as I ought, with perfect esteem and respect,

Your Grace's, &c.,

CAMDEN.

P. S. I understand the Earl has slept well last night, and is to be removed to-day to Downing Street. He would have gone into the country, but Addington thinks he is too weak.

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#### THE ADMIRALTY IN 1778.

[Grafton Memoirs, MS.]

D'ESTAING was for some weeks baffled in his attempts to get through the Straits of Gibraltar, notwithstanding which delay (incredible as it may appear) Lord Howe had not the least intimation from the Admiralty, that a French fleet might be expected in the North American seas, though the forwardness of this fleet for sailing was known throughout Europe; and not a sloop or a cutter despatched with the necessary information to Lord Howe: nor did he know any thing of his danger until a frigate of his own was driven into his fleet by two French ships.

This anecdote may be depended upon; as I heard it more than once from Lord Howe himself. His superior skill saved him from being obliged to fight D'Estaing on terms so inferior, as to allow no possible hope of a victory.\*

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LORD NORTH TO THE KING.

(*Extract.*)

(*October or November, 1779.*)

LORD GOWER came to Lord North to inform him that he had long felt the utmost uneasiness at the situation of His Majesty's affairs; that nothing can be so weak as the Government; that nothing is done; that there was no discipline in the state, the army, or the navy; that impending ruin must be the consequence of the present system of Government; that he thought himself obliged as well in conscience as in wisdom to desire an immediate dismissal from his employment; that he had no connection with any of the members of the Opposition, which he thought as wicked as the administration is weak; that nothing can afford the least hope but a coalition, and he is afraid even that remedy may be too late; that he feels the greatest gratitude for the many marks of Royal goodness which he has received, but that he does not think it the duty of a faithful servant to endeavour to preserve a system which must end in the ruin of His Majesty and of the country. He is determined never again to take office, but to support Government in his private capacity. Lord North thinks that Lord Gower's resignation at the present moment must be the ruin of administration. In Lord North's arguments with Lord Gower, Lord North owns that he had certainly one disadvantage, which is that he holds in his heart and has held for these three years, just the same opinion with Lord Gower.

\* This anecdote not being known to the Opposition of the day, was not urged in debate, and did not therefore admit of any explanation on the part of the Admiralty. Certainly, it rests on the highest authority; but, on the other hand, it appears wholly at variance with the usual activity and alertness of Lord Sandwich.

EXTRACTS OF LETTERS FROM KING GEORGE THE  
THIRD TO LORD NORTH.

1774—1780.

(See the preliminary notice to the former series of these letters in the Appendix, vol. v.)

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*February 4. 1774.*

GENERAL GAGE, though just returned from Boston, expresses his willingness to go back at a day's notice if coercive measures are adopted. He says they will be lions while we are lambs; but if we take the resolute part, they will undoubtedly prove very meek. Four regiments sent to Boston will, he thinks, be sufficient to prevent any disturbance. All men now feel that the fatal compliance in 1766 has increased the pretensions of the Americans to absolute independence.

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*February 16. 1774.*

I AM greatly incensed at the presumption of Charles Fox in forcing you to vote with him last night, but approve much of your making your friends vote in the majority. Indeed, that young man has so thoroughly cast off every principle of common honour and honesty that he must become as contemptible as he is odious. I hope you will let him know you are not insensible of his conduct towards you.

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*February 17. 1774.*

IT is surprising that Mr. Fox has been decent and submissive.

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*July 1. 1774.*

I HAVE seen Mr. Hutchinson, late governor of Massachusetts, and am now well convinced they will soon submit. He owns the Boston Port Bill has been the only wise and effectual method.

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*September 11. 1774.*

THE die is cast. The Colonies must now either triumph or submit. I trust they will submit. I have no objection afterwards to their seeing that there is no inclination at present to lay fresh taxes on them. But there must always be one to keep up the right.

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*August 9. 1775.*

THE making Lord Chatham's family suffer for the conduct of their father is not in the least agreeable to my sentiments. But I should choose to know him to be totally unable to appear on the public stage before I agree to any offer of that kind, lest it should be wrongly construed a fear of him; and indeed his political conduct the last winter was so abandoned that he must, in the eyes of the dispassionate, have totally undone all the merit of his former conduct. As to any gratitude to be expected from him or his family, the whole tenor of their lives has shown them void of that most honourable sentiment. But when decrepitude or death puts an end to him as a trumpet of sedition, I shall make no difficulty in placing the second son's name instead of the father's, and making up the pension 3000*l*.

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*September 10. 1775.*

THE address from Manchester most dutiful and affectionate. As you wish the spirit encouraged, I have no objection, though I know from fatal experience that they will



produce counter-petitions. If the Opposition is powerful next Session, it will surprise me, for I am fighting the battle of the legislature, therefore have a right to expect an almost unanimous support, for I know the uprightness of my intentions, and therefore am ready to stand any attack of ever so dangerous a kind.

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*November 14. 1775.*

THE giving commissions to German officers to get men I can by no means consent to, for it in plain English amounts to making me a kidnapper, which I cannot think a very honourable occupation.

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*November 15. 1775.*

THE East India Directors in their despatch manifestly wish to hurt neither Hastings nor his adversaries, and therefore will most probably disoblige both.

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*March 31. 1776.*

I SHALL aid your claim to appoint the Receiver-General of Jamaica as a Treasury appointment, provided the grant be made out for your son. I shall always be, if possible, happier than yourself to provide for your children. It has not been my fate in general to be well served. By you I have, and therefore cannot forget it.

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*November 15. 1776.*

I HAVE learnt from Lord Weymouth that Charles Fox declared at Arthur's last night, that he should attend the House this day, and then set off for Paris, and not return till after the Recess. Bring as much forward before the Recess as you can, as real business is never so

well considered as when the attention of the House is not taken up by noisy declamation.

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*May 31. 1777.*

LORD CHATHAM's motion can have no other use but to convey some fresh fuel to the rebels. Like most of the other productions of that extraordinary brain, it contains nothing but specious words and malevolence.

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*June 4. 1777.*

I HAVE not the smallest doubt that truth ought to be the chief object in a speech from the throne. It is therefore safest to leave out the foreign awhile. I also agree with Lord Mansfield as to the omission in the paragraph to the House of Commons—from the strange language used by the Speaker. As to the last article, I am much more of his opinion, which may favour the suspicion that there is an intention rather to plaster over the breach with the Colonies, than radically to cure the evil. In my opinion, the Americans will treat before winter.

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*September, 1777.*

HAVING paid the last arrears on the Civil List, I must now do the same for you. I have understood from your hints that you had been in debt ever since you settled in life. I must therefore insist that you allow me to assist you with 10,000*l.* or 15,000*l.*, or even 20,000*l.* if that will be sufficient. It will be easy for you to make an arrangement, or at proper times to take up that sum. You know me very ill if you think not that of all the letters I ever wrote to you this one gives me the greatest pleasure; and I want no other return but your being convinced that I love you as well as a man of worth, as I esteem you as a Minister. Your conduct at a critical moment I never can forget.

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*January 13. 1778.*

THINGS seem on the same uncertain ground as last year. A trifle may any hour cause war to break out, and though the French Ministers wish to avoid it, yet they will not leave off their dealings with rebels, by which every day they may be drawn into what they do not choose. Franklin and Deane either have no power to treat or are not inclined. While nothing short of independency will be accepted, I do not think that there is a man either bold or mad enough to presume to treat for the mother-country on such a basis. Perhaps the time will come when it may be wise to abandon all America but Canada, Nova Scotia, and the Floridas; but then the generality of the nation must see it first in that light. But to treat with independents can never be possible.

Lord Amherst thinks nothing less than an additional army of 40,000 men sufficient to carry on an offensive war in North America; that a sea-war is the only wise plan to make the Americans come into any plan that Great Britain can decently consent to, and that at this hour they will laugh at any proposition. As to the Generals, it will be difficult to get Sir William Howe to remain, and not less so to get Lord George Germaine to act to him in such a manner as will make the efforts of either not abortive on that head.

What is still more material to be settled is the plan on which administration is to repel the different attacks when Parliament meets, as to calling for papers, proposing inquiries, &c.

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*January 31. 1778.*

I SHOULD have been greatly surprised at the inclination expressed by you to retire, had I not known that however you may now and then despond, yet that you have too much personal affection for me and sense of honour to allow such a thought to take any hold on your mind.

You must remember that before the Recess, I strongly advised you not to bind yourself to bring forward any plan

for restoring tranquillity to North America, not from any absurd ideas of unconditional submission, which my mind never harboured, but from foreseeing that whatever can be proposed will be liable not to bring America back to her attachment, but to dissatisfy this country, which so cheerfully and handsomely carries on the contest, and has a right to have the struggle continued until convinced that it is vain. Perhaps this is the minute that you ought to be least in hurry to produce a plan, for every letter from France adds to the probability of a speedy declaration of war. Should that happen, it might be wise to withdraw the troops from the revolted provinces, and having strengthened Canada, &c., to make war on the French and Spanish islands. Success in that object will repay our exertions, and this country having had its attention diverted to a fresh object would be in a better temper to subscribe to such terms as administration might offer to America.

I do not mean to reject all idea, if a foreign war should not arise this Session, of laying a proposition before Parliament.

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*February 2. 1778.*

THOUGH Lord Chatham's name, which was always his greatest merit, is undoubtedly not so great as formerly, yet it will greatly hurt Lord Rockingham's party with many factious persons to see that he disavows as unjustifiable the lengths they would go in favour of America, and will therefore prove a fortunate event to the introducing into Parliament the proposal you intend to make.

I look on the recall of Sir W. Howe as a measure settled; Lord Howe will resign. Yet he must be named in the new commission: but if he comes home, I think neither General nor Admiral ought, but Peers and Commoners from home.

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*February 5. 1778.*

IN talking of your plan for opening a negotiation with America, Lord George Germaine said to me he was con-

vinced the repeal of the Boston Charter Act would not alone bring the Colonies into any propositions; that the Declaratory Act, though but waste paper, was what galled them; that he should not like nominally to be drove to repealing it. If, therefore, any step was to be taken at this hour, he would wish it might be one which would (not) require any further concessions; and he therefore wished all the Acts might be repealed subsequent to 1763; that he would fairly own the taking any step at this juncture might either be conducive to hurrying France into a treaty with the rebels, or it might make the Colonies less inclined to treat with that insidious nation; that he could not decide which seemed most probable.

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*February 24. 1778.*

THE more I think of the conduct of the Advocate of Scotland\*, the more I am incensed against him. More favours have been heaped on the shoulders of that man than ever were bestowed on any Scotch lawyer; and he seems studiously to embrace an opportunity to create difficulty. But men of talents, when not accompanied by integrity, are pests instead of blessings; and true wisdom ought to crush them rather than nourish them.

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*March 3. 1778.*

I THINK Lord G. Germaine's defection a most favourable event. He has so many enemies that he would have been a heavy load when the failure of Burgoyne came to be canvassed in Parliament; yet I never would have recommended his removal. Now he will save us all trouble. The laying it on my bequeathing the government of

\* Mr. Henry Dundas, afterwards Lord Melville. The King appears to have taken offence at his support of a motion by Mr. Powys (February 23. 1778) to insert a clause in one of Lord North's conciliatory Bills repealing the Massachusetts Charter Act. The speech of Mr. Dundas on that occasion, though not reported, is mentioned. See Almon's *Parliamentary Register*, 1778, p. 394.

Charlemont to Carleton is quite absurd, and shows the malevolence of his mind. Carleton was wrong in permitting his pen to convey such asperity to a Secretary of State, and therefore has been removed from the government of Canada. But his meritorious defence of Quebec made him a proper object of military reward; and as such I could not provide for any other General till I had paid the debt his services had a right to claim.

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*(No date, but supposed to be March 15. 1778.)*

On a subject which has for many months engrossed my thoughts I cannot have the smallest difficulty instantly to answer the letter I have just received from you. My sole wish is to keep you at the head of the Treasury, and as my confidential Minister. That end obtained, I am willing, through your channel, to accept any description of persons that will come avowedly to the support of your administration, and as such do not object to Lord Shelburne and Mr. Barré, whom personally, perhaps, I dislike as much as Alderman Wilkes; and I cannot give you a stronger proof of my desire to forward your wishes than taking this unpleasant step. But I declare in the strongest and most solemn manner that (though) I do not object to your addressing yourself to Lord Chatham, yet that you must acquaint him that I shall never address myself to him but through you; and on a clear explanation that he is to step forth to support an administration wherein you are First Lord of the Treasury; and that I cannot consent to have any conversation with him till the Ministry is formed; that if he comes into this, I will, as he supports you, receive him with open arms. I leave the whole arrangement to you, provided Lord Suffolk, Lord Weymouth and my two able lawyers are satisfied as to their situations; but choose Ellis for Secretary at War in preference to Barré, who in that event will get a more lucrative employment, but will not be so near my person. Having said this, I will only add, to put before your eye my most inmost thoughts, that no advantage to this country, nor personal danger to myself, can ever make me address



myself to Lord Chatham, or to any other branch of Opposition. Honestly I would rather lose the Crown I now wear than bear the ignominy of possessing it under their shackles. I might write volumes if I would state the feelings of my mind; but I have honestly, fairly, and affectionately told you the whole of my mind, and what I will never depart from. Should Lord Chatham wish to see me before he gives an answer, I shall most certainly refuse it. I have had enough of personal negotiation; and neither my dignity nor my feelings will ever let me again submit to it.

Men of less principle and honesty than I pretend to may look on public measures and opinions as a game. I always act from conviction; but I am shocked at the base arts all these men have used, therefore cannot go toward them: if they come to your assistance, I will accept them.

You have now full power to act, but I do not expect Lord Chatham and his crew will come to your assistance; but if they do not, I trust the rest of the arrangement will greatly strengthen, and will give efficacy to, administration.

Thurlow as Chancellor, Yorke as Secretary of State, will be efficient men. Numbers we have already. Lord Dartmouth as Steward, and Lord Weymouth as Privy Seal, will please them both. I am certain Lord Weymouth's conduct on the last vacancy of the Seals gives him a right to this change, if agreeable to him.

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*March 16. 1778.*

You can want no further explanation of the language held to Mr. Eden the last evening. It is (so) totally contrary to the only ground on which I could have accepted the service of that perfidious man, that I need not enter on it. Lord Chatham as dictator, as planning a new administration, I appeal to my letters of yesterday if I did not clearly speak out upon. If Lord Chatham agrees to support your administration, or, if you like the expressions better, the "fundamentals of the present ad-

ministration," and with Lord North at the head of the Treasury, Lords Suffolk, Gower, and Weymouth in great offices to their own inclination, Lord Sandwich in the Admiralty, Thurlow Chancellor, and Wedderburn as Chief Justice, I will not object to see that great man when Lord Shelburne and Dunning, with Barré, are placed already in office; but I solemnly declare that nothing shall bring me to treat personally with Lord Chatham. If I saw Lord Chatham, he would insist on as total a change as Lord Shelburne yesterday threw out.

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*March 17. 1778.*

Lord AMHERST advises an immediate retreat from Philadelphia to New York, and if the Americans be resolved, on the arrival of the Commissioners, to join France, he advises the evacuation of New York and Rhode Island, and the troops to be employed against the West India Islands.

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*March 17. 1778.*

*(Second letter of that date.)*

No consideration in life shall make me stoop to Opposition. I am still ready to accept any part of them that will come to the assistance of my present efficient Ministers; but, whilst any ten men in the kingdom will stand by me, I will not give myself up into bondage. I will rather risk my Crown than do what I think personally disgraceful. It is impossible that the nation should not stand by me. If they will not, they shall have another King, for I never will put my hand to what will make me miserable to the last hour of my life. Therefore let Thurlow instantly know that I will appoint him Chancellor, and the Solicitor-General that if he does not choose to be Attorney-General, we will treat with the Chief Justice of the Common Pleas to resign.

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March 18. 1778.

I AM highly incensed at the language held by Lord Shelburne last night to Eden, and approve of that of the latter. I am fairly worn down. But all proposals and answers must in future go through you, for I will not change the administration; but, if I can with honour, let you make acquisitions.

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March 18. 1778.

(*Second letter of that date.*)

I AM extremely indifferent whether Lord Granby goes or does not go with the abject message of the Rockingham party to Hayes. I will certainly send none to that place.

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March 22. 1778.

YOUR now always recurring to a total change of the administration, obliges me to ask you one clear question. If I will not, by your advice, take the step which I look on as disgraceful to myself and destruction to my country, are you resolved, agreeable to the example of the Duke of Grafton, *at the hour of danger to desert me?*

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March 23. 1778.

I CANNOT return the messenger without expressing my satisfaction at your determination not to desert at this hour, which indeed I always thought your sense of honour must prevent.

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March 27. 1778.

BY Lord Buckingham's two letters, I see that he is become quite Irish in his opinions. Be on your guard not

to encourage him, so as to draw this country into granting too many advantages of trade to Ireland. If that kingdom is to have any *graces* of that kind, I desire they may be granted with a sparing hand, for every favour granted there is only a reason for asking a greater.

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*April 8. 1778.*

MAY not the political exit of Lord Chatham incline you to continue at the head of my affairs? If it will not, you cannot be surprised that I again mention it; and if I must here add, that I cannot begin to form any plan till Mr. Thurlow is in possession of the Great Seal

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*May 12. 1778.*

I AM rather surprised at the vote of a public funeral and monument for Lord Chatham. But I trust it is worded as a testimony of gratitude for his rousing the nation at the beginning of the last war, and his conduct as Secretary of State, — or this compliment, if paid to his general conduct, is rather an offensive measure to me personally. As to adding a life to the pension, I have no objection.

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*May 19. 1778.*

I NEVER meant to grant you the Wardenship of the Cinque Ports for life. The being once persuaded, when quite ignorant of public business, to grant that office for life to Lord Holderness, for a particular object, is no reason for doing so now. I daily find the evil of putting so many employments out of the power of the Crown; and for the rest of my life I will not confer any in that way unless where ancient practice has made it matter of course. I will confer it on you during pleasure, with an additional salary to make it equal to the sum received by Lord Holderness. It must be termed an additional salary, that the income may not be increased in other hands.

Sir R. Walpole's pension during life was natural; he had firmly for twenty years withstood a strong Opposition: the Crown deserted him, and his enemies came into office; no other mode, therefore, would have done. Mr. Grenville got the reversion of the Tellership before he came into the Treasury, as a compensation for resigning his pretensions to the Speaker's chair. Lord Northington's pension for life was a shameful bargain of the idol of the House of Commons\* to get the Great Seal for Lord Camden. In addition to the Cinque Ports, I shall not object to a reversion of a Tellership to your family; but I should much prefer your remaining at the head of the Treasury, where many opportunities will of course arise by which I may benefit your family without fixing a bad precedent.

Why is the appointment of Mr. Thurlow not concluded? You want to retire, and yet will not take the first step to enable me to acquiesce in your request.

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*July 12. 1778.*

I HAVE read the narrative of what passed between Sir James Wright and Dr. Addington, and am fully convinced of what I suspected before, that the old Earls, like old coachmen, still loved the smack of the whip; and Sir James Wright, to appear a man of consequence, has gone beyond his instructions. Certainly it would have been wiser if no message had been sent.

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*October 13. 1778.*

SPAIN will join France next spring; but I trust the British navy will then be in a state to cope with both nations. Armed as France and Spain now are, no peace could be durable or much less expensive than war. It must now be decided whether France or Britain should yield. You may depend on my readiness to sheath

\* Lord Chatham.

the sword whenever a permanent tranquillity can be obtained.

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*November 14. 1778.*

IF Lord North can see with the degree of enthusiasm I do the beauty, excellence, and perfection of the British Constitution as by law established, and consider that if any one branch of the empire is allowed to cast off its dependency the others will inevitably follow the example, he will not allow despondency to find a place in his breast, but resolve not merely out of duty to fill his post, but with vigour to meet every obstacle that may arise. He shall meet with the most cordial support from me. But the times require vigour, or the state will be ruined.

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*April 21. 1779.*

You are much above any little intrigue, which certainly is very prevalent in the composition of the Attorney-General\*, and still more in that of his pupil, Mr. Eden. I recommend you (to) place your chief political confidence in the Chancellor†, who is a firm and fair man, always ready to give his opinion when called for, yet not ambitious of going out of his own particular line, therefore will not attempt the part of a Mentor, which the two other gentlemen have too much aimed at. Every quarrel with him must be healed by a job.

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*June 11. 1779.*

THE object of Sir W. Meredith's address is pretended to be the desire of peace with America—that of Mr. Eden is to be employed as a private negotiator with Franklin to effect a peace.

No man in my dominions desires solid peace more than I do; but no inclination to get out of the present difficulties, which certainly keep my mind very far from a state

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\* Mr. Wedderburn.

† Lord Thurlow.



of ease, can incline me to enter into the destruction of the empire. Lord North frequently says that the advantages to be gained by this contest never could repay the expense. I own that any war, be it ever so successful, if a person will sit down and weigh the expense, they will find, as in the last, that it has impoverished the state enriched; but this is only weighing such events in the scale of a tradesman behind his counter. It is necessary for those whom Providence has placed in my station to weigh whether expenses, though very great, are not sometimes necessary to prevent what would be more ruinous than any loss of money. The present contest with America, I cannot help saying, is the most serious in which any country was ever engaged. It contains such a train of consequences that they must be examined to feel its real weight. Whether the laying a tax was deserving all the evils that have arisen from it, I should suppose no man could allege without being thought (more) fit for Bedlam than a seat in the senate; but step by step the demands of America have risen. Independence is their object, which every man not willing to sacrifice every object to a momentary and inglorious peace must concur with me in thinking this country can never submit to. Should America succeed in that, the West Indies must follow, not in independence, but for their own interest they must become dependant on America: Ireland would soon follow; and this island, reduced to itself, would be a poor island indeed.

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*June 12. 1779.*

AMERICA, from distress, begins to feel; and gentlemen who pretend to be Englishmen are bringing forward questions only to raise the drooping spirit of America!

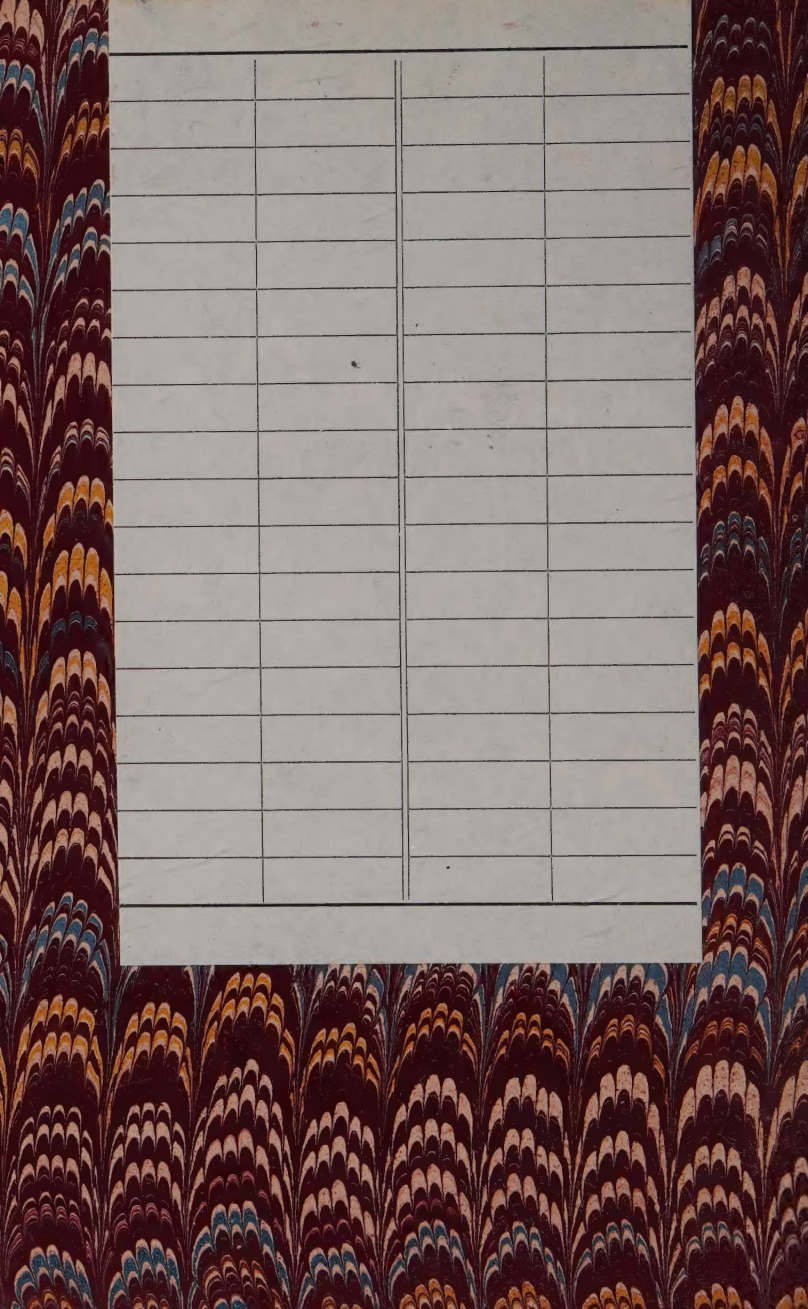
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